

TWO TALES

Transformation of Buckeye Camp
Bret Harte

The Story of a Coward
William Maynadier Browne

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AN INTER-PLANETARY EPISODE.

By Julian Hawthorne.

UPON a divan, in the recess of a window which stood open to the warm night air, lay the body of a young woman. Her head rested on a silken pillow, which swelled up on each side of her face. The soft *crêpe* of her dress defined the low curves of her breasts, the rounded slenderness of her arms, and the outline of her limbs, which were like those of Diana for suppleness and fleetness. Her hands were relaxed, the palms turned upwards: the golden-brown masses of her hair framed her beautiful face, and descended to her waist.

There was no moon, but the night was clear, and the great planet Mars hung half-way up the sky, its rays falling on the closed eyelids and lips of the girl, and seeming to melt into them. Outside the window grew an oleander, the fragrance of whose blossoms floated into the room, like music transformed into perfume. There was no sound except the slow ticking of a clock from the dusky interior of the room, and the whisper of waves on the shore at the foot of the high lawn on which the house stood.

Beside the divan sat two men. One was gray-haired, with a smooth-shaven, refined face of a keenly intellectual cast. He sat with his chin supported on his interlaced fingers, and his eyes fixed absently on the ruddy planet. The other was of lion-like aspect: his swarthy and powerful countenance darkened forth from a shaggy jungle of black hair; his figure was massive and noble. He leaned forward, resting his left elbow on his knee, while a finger of his right hand was pressed against the hollow of the girl's wrist. At length he leaned his shoulders against the back of his chair, and folded his arms.

"Six days, did you say, Penryn?"

The gray man roused himself from his abstraction, and passed his hand across his forehead. "Six days at dawn, to-morrow," he replied, with a clear, silvery enunciation, which contrasted with the deep roll of his companion's utterance. "The seizure has been annual since her fourteenth year."

"The period, then, is regular?"

"I'm an astronomer, you know, Hervey, and yonder" — he pointed

at the sky — “is my time-piece. Mars fixes this date for me. When (as is the case now) he reaches that part of his orbit which brings him nearest to our earth, Yoga falls into a condition that culminates in this trance. As he recedes, she recovers consciousness. It is an odd coincidence.”

“A coincidence! Are you content to call it that?”

“What more can it be?” returned the other, smiling. “Can any sympathy exist between the stars and ourselves?”

“Sympathy! Yes!” answered Hervey, fixing his great, glowing eyes on his friend. “Don’t you know that when I stamp my foot, the impulse is transmitted beyond the Milky Way? The rhythm of our breathing is conditioned on the revolution of the globe; the sweet influences of the Pleiades are answered by the beatings of our hearts; and so, the meanings of the firmament are hidden in our souls, and appear in signs on our bodies, legible to those who have studied the language.”

“But this is astrology, my dear Hervey,” remarked Penryn, still smiling.

“Well, what of that? Astrology has been discredited by charlatans, but it is still a science. It enables me to tell you that your daughter bears upon her body the signet of the planet Mars: and he is connected with the circumstances of her birth. Am I not right?”

“Why,” said Penryn, stroking his chin, “perhaps some colorable grounds could be made out for your contention. Yoga’s mother had a peculiar organization. In the spiritualistic jargon of to-day, I suppose she would be called a ‘sensitive.’ Of course, I never thought it expedient to encourage such tendencies; but they sometimes were manifested spontaneously. One night, while I was investigating certain features of Mars, and had my equatorial trained on him, my wife came into the observatory, and sat down in the chair at the eye-piece — I being at the table writing out some notes. When I had finished, I spoke to her; she did not answer. I looked round, and found she had fallen asleep in the chair — as I supposed: but on examining her, she appeared to be in a cataleptic state, her eyes open. I laid her on the sofa, and she presently recovered. She spoke of some dream or vision she had had: she thought she had visited another earth, inhabited by beings in some respects similar to ourselves. She had been chiefly attracted by an infant, a beautiful little boy, whom she had heard addressed as Kanor.”

Hervey threw one leg across the other, and pushed his hand through his hair. “The light of the planet on the retina, and the monotonous hum of the clock-work that moved the equatorial, had hypnotised her,” he muttered. “That is familiar: but the impressions of another planet. . . . Well, go on!”

"In a few days, the matter passed out of both our minds; but, between five and six months later, Yoga was born."

"Ah!" murmured Hervey.

"She was a healthy and happy child, and appeared normal. But one evening, when she was about seven, her mother brought her into the observatory, and the child, without our noticing it, climbed up into the chair to look through the glass. All of a sudden she attracted our attention by clapping her hands and calling out: 'There — there! Kanor! Kanor!' She kept repeating the word. Neither her mother nor I recalled having heard it before. 'What can the child be looking at?' said her mother. 'The object-glass is on Mars,' I said. She gave a start, and put her hand on mine. 'Mars!' she said: 'Kanor! I remember now!' 'What do you remember?' I asked. But before she could answer, the whole thing came over me. It was certainly a remarkable instance of heredity."

"And are you content to believe," exclaimed Hervey, "that some vague pre-natal impression could suffice to prompt the utterance of the word—at the moment, too, when the child was looking for the first time at the image of the planet? Is it fear, or bigotry, or scepticism, Penryn, that withholds you from admitting the truth?"

"The truth?" smiled the astronomer, "a bold word, that!"

"Never mind the boldness! We have only to recognize what happened. When your wife, entranced by the light of Mars, was set free from her body, her spirit, liberated from the trammels of space and time, found itself in the region whence the light came. What she saw there was no dream, but an actual experience. And the unborn life which was, at that time, a part of her life, partook of that experience, and was affected by it in a more vital and indelible manner."

"That is an interesting hypothesis; but"—

"No, no, Penryn. Recollect that the child not only repeated the word 'Kanor,' but did so with manifest delight. She saw, or was conscious of some one, and recognized him. No theory of heredity can adequately explain that."

"But you surely don't suppose that she saw through my telescope (it is a good one, but it has its limitations) a human being forty-two million miles distant?"

"I say, on your own authority, that the child inherited peculiar powers. The probability is that she possesses, at times, the rare faculty of open spiritual sight. The light of any given star or planet, Mars for instance, has its own peculiar vibration. The child, being born under the Martian influence, would recognize this vibration, just as you or I would recognize a particular odor: and this recognition would awaken in her mind a train of associations, and also (thanks to her special fac-

ulty) induce the state in which her spiritual faculties are opened. That she actually saw Kanor I have no doubt, though the medium of the vision was the eye of the soul and not of the body."

"It might be logical to assert that the spiritual eye could see a spiritual object; but how could it see a physical one — which we are supposing this Kanor to be?"

"I suppose Kanor to be a spirit clothed with a body. But I remember that the planet Mars is some myriads of years in advance of us in the process of evolution; and it is inconceivable that its inhabitants should not be correspondingly in advance of us in the development of psychic power. Doubtless their daily lives are passed as much in the spiritual as in the physical sphere of being; and Kanor's spirit would be able to meet and commune with Yoga's, across this gulf of physical distance, as easily as you and I are conversing within arm's length of each other. Indeed, I suspect that the two have been in frequent communication from the first. I suspect that she is with him at this moment. Has she never mentioned him to you?"

Penryn arched his eyebrows, and slowly shook his head. "I regret to say that she has not. But your suggestions are disquieting. How is a father to act whose only daughter is carrying on a tender correspondence with a young man who lives on the other side of the solar system, and whom he cannot, therefore, interrogate as to his intentions, character or fortune? Suppose he were to propose an elopement to her, how could I" —

Hervey rose abruptly from his chair, and took a turn up and down the room. Pausing in front of Penryn, he said gravely, "Are you willing I should prove the truth of what you call my hypothesis?"

"Why, as you know, my dear fellow, I invited you here, when I heard you were in the neighborhood, partly to renew our old university friendship, and partly because your reputation as a physician and a specialist in nervous and mental diseases made me hope that you might be able to do something for Yoga's trances. If what you now propose would throw light on the nature of her affliction (as I can't help considering it) and would result in no harm to her, pray go on."

A shaded lamp, shining obscurely through the open folding-doors of an inner room, was the sole source of illumination in the apartment, save only for the rosy radiance of Mars.

Hervey's movements were slow and deliberate, but confident. He took Yoga's two hands gently in his, and, bending over her, gazed for several moments steadfastly in her face. His breathing came more and more slowly, till it was almost imperceptible. He was now apparently motionless: only the beating of his pulses remained to tell that he lived; and one might have fancied that this rhythmic impulse was com-

municated to Yoga, and that she responded involuntarily to it. After a time, Hervey began to breathe again, deepening his respiration by insensible degrees; but an acute sense might have noticed that the measure of his respiration was not the same as it had been at first: it kept a different time, as if he had adjusted it to another standard.

Gently he relinquished her hands, though his eyes never left her face. She wore on her waist, wound round it many times, a delicate scarf of white silk, fastened at the left side with a single loop. Hervey undid the loop, and slowly unwound the girdle, fold after fold, observing in all his movements a rhythm based upon his respiration. At length it was entirely detached from her body. He gathered it up, and drew it several times through his hands, always slowly, and with his gaze centred on her face, as if his great black eyes penetrated through her closed lids into her soul. He took the girdle by its centre, and laid it across her forehead; then passed it underneath her head, crossed it under her chin, and knotted it there. Pausing a moment, he next slipped the ends gently underneath her body, brought them round, and knotted them again beneath her bosom. Finally, holding the terminations of the girdle in his hands, he twisted them upon one another in a peculiar manner, and grasped the twist in his left hand. The spell of the knots was completed.

As Penryn contemplated these proceedings his lips moved slightly, as if in a smile. Nevertheless, he was conscious of a feeling of oppression and foreboding; the silence, the gloom, the profound earnestness of Hervey's demeanor, and the extraordinary brilliance of Mars, which seemed actually to be approaching through space, combined to lay fetters upon his will, so that he could hardly have spoken had he wished it. And Yoga, lying there, appeared more unsubstantial than ever.

Now, in tones scarcely audible, Hervey began a strange chant. It rose and fell in low undulations of sound, ever following the pulse of the breathing, an inarticulate monody, but by degrees resolving itself into words, though such as the listener had never heard. The words became more distinct, and the voice not louder, but more intense and concentrated. It was as if the whole strength of a soul of mighty power were gathering itself upon each note, yet with such restraint that the voice, which might have made itself heard across the bay, was modulated to the compass of a lover's murmur. It vibrated deeper and deeper, with an emphasis more and more commanding, until the air quivered around them, and Penryn, staring and listening, smiled no longer, and felt his heart shake in his breast.

The chant sank into silence, though a voiceless throbbing lingered in the ear, as after the ceasing of an organ-peal. Then, out of the womb of that silence, was born a new voice, the sound of which made Pen-

ryn's hair stir on his head, and his lips turn dry. It was not low, it was not loud: it seemed to come from an immeasurable distance, yet with entire distinctness. It was in the room, and yet its source was indefinitely remote. But it was not these attributes that startled and awed Penryn—it was that the voice was the voice of Yoga; although no movement of her lips was visible, nor did any sign of life appear.

“Do not draw me back,” the voice said; “I am happy—the time has not come!”

“I do not ask you to come back,” replied Hervey, in a clear whisper. “Tell me where you are, Yoga; answer!”

Reluctantly the voice came again. “I am with Kanor.”

“Are you in this world?”

“Yes . . . No . . . In his world—my spirit with his.”

“You are in the spiritual world, then?”

“No. I cannot explain. We are together.”

Hervey paused a moment, and then said, with intense energy, “I wish to talk with Kanor. Tell him to speak to me—through you!”

For perhaps a minute there was no response. Penryn bent forward to listen, but his heart beat so heavily as to obscure his senses. His mind was divided between resentment and fearfulness: for while every instinct of training and education in him cried out against the possibility of such things as seemed to be taking place, he yet was unable to throw off the persuasion that here was something more than seeming, and that he was actually witnessing a transaction which overturned the central strongholds of science. In the midst of his agitation a new sound broke the silence—a voice wholly different in timbre and quality from any heard before, though it appeared to issue directly from Yoga's unmoving lips. It was a masculine voice, firm and resonant, though uttering itself with a certain effort, as if speech were either unfamiliar to the speaker, or else the conditions were such as to render it difficult.

“I am Kanor,” he said. “What do you want of me?”

Hervey turned slowly upon Penryn, and eyed him with an expression of gloomy triumph. “You wished to become acquainted with your daughter's lover,” he said. “Here is your opportunity. Ask him what you will!”

Penryn's teeth chattered, like those of a man overcome with cold. But pride and unreasoning anger helped him to command himself. He gave a short, husky laugh. “This is unworthy of me to countenance, and of you to foist upon me,” said he. “I was not prepared for—for mummery and—ventriloquism!”

“Do not blaspheme, Penryn,” returned the other, sternly. He was about to say more, when the strange voice interrupted him.

“I am on my way to you.”

Hervey stepped back, at the same time making a restraining gesture with his hand to Penryn, who had half started from his chair. Neither knew what was to happen; but their eyes involuntarily rested on the red planet, which wavered and became blurred, as if seen through a liquid medium, or an unusually dense atmosphere. It grew dimmer; a shadow had passed over it, or else a heavy vapor was rising between them and the window. The vapor grew thicker, and assumed a vague outline, rendered visible by the rosy flush imparted to it by the planet's rays. It hovered over the figure on the divan, and was still impelled forwards, its apparent solidity momentarily increasing, until it erected itself from the floor within arm's reach of the two spectators: it was no longer a vapor, but a thing of substance, a palpable figure, the figure of a man. Even as they gazed, it took on the very hue and quality of life — a noble-looking youth, tall, symmetrical and vigorous. His flesh was slightly luminous, and of a ruddy color; he was clad in a closely-fitting tunic, woven of a fine and soft vegetable fibre; his hair, of a wavy character, instead of clustering close about his head, floated around it, like that of a man beneath the water. He had no beard, but the lower part of his face had a dark shade upon it, which seemed to inhere in the substance of the skin, and contrasted with the brilliance of the rest of his complexion. His eyes were of a long, oval shape, blue as sapphires, and had the quality of flame; their regard, though friendly and calm, was almost insupportable. The bearing of this beautiful and terrible young man was princely; and there was a sensible emanation of warmth from his person, as of a soul of living fire radiating through the flesh. When, in turning, his right hand chanced to touch the back of the chair which Hervey had lately occupied, a vivid spark started from his finger-tips, accompanied by a faint detonation, and by a peculiar vivifying odor, like that following a lightning-flash.

He looked round the room, his glance delaying a moment on the two men, who blinked and turned away their faces; and then he looked out into the night, and saw the dark earth, and the twinkling waters of the bay, and the planet that hung above them. Finally his eyes sought the form of Yoga, on the divan, and there they stayed.

"Then this is where you live," he said, in a tone of exquisite tenderness. "This is the mask that hides you, when you are not with me!"

He knelt on one knee beside the body, and by a swift but smooth movement loosened the knots of the girdle, and the girdle itself crisped and turned to impalpable ashes in his grasp. With a delicately caressing gesture, he laid his palms lightly on her cheeks, and touched her shoulders. "Even the mask is lovable," he said, with a sort of sportive adoration; "but how much lovelier you are, Yoga, my love! You

shall not return here. Power has been given me, at last, and you shall be incarnate where I am. The meeting of our spirits was sweet; but the flesh also has its delights and faculties, and we will wear it for the rest of our journey to the Joyful Gates. Come! I will loosen this cord that binds you to the home heart, and we will go!"

But as he bent over her bosom, Hervey, by a mighty effort, threw off the spell that had paralyzed him, and his voice broke forth:

"I charge you, forbear!" he cried. "This is a human world, as well as yours! She is loved and longed for here! By what right do you come across the gulf fixed between us, and take her from the home her creator gave her?"

"Was not the way prepared for me?" answered the other, calmly, turning his head, and seeming to glow more brightly as he spoke. "For the rest, my love is for her, and hers for me, and the law of love makes my place hers."

"I love her, too!" growled Hervey, in tones deep and fierce as the roaring of a stormy sea. "When I grappled for her spirit in the darkness, and made it hear my summons in the hiding-places of the unknown, I learned to know her and to love her. There is no power stronger than love, and in its name I challenge you for her!"

"Be satisfied," returned the other, gently; "she was mine from the first."

But Hervey started forward, with hands outstretched to tear this being of incarnate flame away from her. Kanor uttered a warning word, but it was too late. As Hervey's clutch fell on his shoulder, the arm dropped to his side, withered and paralyzed, and he himself staggered back, gasping and helpless. In Kanor's eyes there shone a light of compassion; but he laid one hand over Yoga's heart, and then rose lightly to his feet, and uplifted his arms with a movement of power.

At once, his figure began to fade, or to dissolve like an evening cloud evaporating in summer. Yet, while he still remained visible, Hervey was dimly aware of another figure beside him, who smiled, and seemed to wave a greeting and a farewell. The vision was fair, but it was absorbed into the rays of the planet, and, receding, was lost in that radiance, and in the embracing darkness of the summer night.

"What has happened?" queried Penryn, in a shaken and complaining voice. "These diabolical juggleries of yours, Hervey, have deprived me of my senses, I believe! I have been in a trance myself! What is it, man?"

"It is death — or life," answered he, gloomily, regarding the corpse upon the divan. "But better any death than such a life as yours."

HOW HE WENT TO THE DEVIL.

By Barrett Wendell.

A DOZEN years ago, when we were little more than boys, everybody thought Tom the most promising of the lot. He was distinctly handsome ; he was a capital athlete, yet not a bit vulgar ; he was an excellent scholar without a touch of priggishness ; his morals in general were so good that it never occurred to anybody to talk about them ; and without apparently trying to be, he was immensely popular. I remember still a couple of phrases, picked up in random reading, and tucked away in the same pigeon-hole of memory with Tom. One was from the campaign life of some rising politician, described as possessing " that fascinating superiority that excels without effort." The other was the question of an admiring old gentleman in one of Bulwer's novels, who being informed that feminine beauty was not the weakness of one of Bulwer's paragons, asked : " What the devil *is* his weakness?"

Tom's father, a lawyer of parts enough to maintain at once a considerable practice and an unblemished reputation, died when Tom was nearly of age. In a couple of years Tom's mother married again — not quite to his satisfaction. So he showed his character by declining to live at home, yet maintaining friendly relations with those who did. The family went abroad for a year : and liked it so much that they never came back, but remained in Paris, " cultivating," as somebody expressed it, " the morals of the Restoration." It is said that, after his trouble was made public, Tom offered to join them there ; naturally they would have nothing to do with him.

His very misfortunes, then, conspired with nature to do him good. They strengthened his character, and excited that most valuable kind of sympathy which cannot decently declare itself in any more troublesome form than constant friendly interest. He might have had the best of backing in any profession he chose ; to my knowledge he had more than one chance that any of the rest of us would have given our eyes for. But after much thought he decided to devote himself to study.

" I don't need to scramble for money," he said ; " I have enough to live on."

"But not to marry on," I told him.

"That depends," he said with a laugh, "on whom I want to marry." Which was perfectly true. There was no reason, so far as any of us could see, why he should not marry whomever he pleased. Altogether, Tom was a depressing friend to people with limited powers and unlimited aspirations.

I remember one long talk with him about this time.

"Pessimism," he said, with all the authority of inexperience, "is irrefutably true. So is optimism. We live in the best possible world and in the worst; because, so far as we are concerned, we live in the only possible world. The one thing we can possibly affect is the future. Conceivably the world may be a little different for our having lived in it. And the whole question is just this: Shall we do anything, or shan't we? Personally, I am an optimist; which means that as a matter of taste, or principle, I intend to do something."

"What?" I asked. "Something is anything or nothing."

"I intend," said Tom, with that robust masculine decision of his, "to leave the world in possession of more knowledge than I found it with. That is the only thing worth doing that has ever been done."

Then he went on to specify how in geography and astronomy and geology and biology, a good deal had been done by other people; and in psychology nothing to speak of. And then we both went to an evening party.

One Sunday Tom and I happened to be staying at a country-house where Sabbatarian principle exhausted itself at the benediction of the morning service, and people dined in a fashion that those who love to dine, love to think about. After dinner, talk growing slow, somebody proposed that we amuse ourselves by "willing." This game consists in sending somebody out of the room while somebody else hides a key; then the seeker returns, and the hider, grasping his hand, thinks vigorously of where the key is hidden; the seeker is thereupon expected mysteriously to divine the hiding-place. As a rule, he does nothing of the sort; which is what makes the game amusing.

Among the guests that evening was a singularly attractive girl with what are called expressive eyes. The quality they generally expressed was purity. When she looked at you, you felt convinced that the world, as she saw it, was very different from the coarse and wicked one you habitually lived in. She talked little, but had the power of making you say to her any number of things you were glad to have said. She went everywhere; but as she was by no means well off, she gave lessons in music. So Sunday was to her a holiday, and she had been enjoying it.

After a number of unsuccessful attempts to find the key by various

members of the party, she went out of the room, and Tom hid the key beneath the lid of the piano. Then we called her back, and somebody tied a handkerchief about her eyes, and Tom took her hand. For a moment she stood perfectly still. Then she shuddered so that we all started; and swayed slowly backward. Tom raised his left hand quickly, and supported her by placing it between her shoulders. Almost instantly she walked straight to the piano, put her hand under the lid, and drew out the key; and then, lifting the handkerchief with a swift movement of both hands, asked in a dazed way, where she was. Her eyes looked frightened. Everybody exclaimed with delight at her success. She laughed rather nervously; and sitting in the nearest chair, began to fan herself.

"We will try again," said Tom, with cool decision.

The girl looked up with a fresh shudder, and shook her head. "Please don't," she said, with something like a child's plaintiveness.

"Come," said Tom, in a tone that sounded surprisingly like command. Whereupon, with the frightened look growing stronger, she left the room.

Tom hid the key this time in some very inaccessible place. Then we called her back and blindfolded her. Then Tom took her hand again. By this time he had begun to look oddly too; his face had an expression of intensity I had never seen there before. When he took the girl's hand, she shuddered again, and tried to draw it away.

"Don't," she exclaimed, hurriedly.

We saw Tom's fingers tighten over hers. She swayed backward. Up went his left hand to support her. His face was set; his eyes were fixed on her lips. When his hand touched her back, she started as if she were burned. Her face grew white; her lips twitched.

"Don't!" she shrieked. "O, don't!" And she was off in a fit of hysterics. Which naturally broke up the party for the evening.

That night Tom came into my room. He was distinctly excited, he said; he was obliged to talk, and as there was nobody else to talk to, he regretted to say that I should have to listen. His experience had been very remarkable, it appeared. He had often seen "willing" tried before, but never with much success. In most cases the experiment was of no value, because hardly anybody knew enough absolutely to refrain from muscular movement. But he had studied the matter; he was sure he held himself perfectly in check. Whatever guided her to the key, it was no muscular movement or even tremor of his. He had been on the watch for them; had they existed, he must have perceived them. As for the pain she had seemed to suffer, he thought he understood what she felt; he had suffered intensely himself. In the first place, there had been a peculiar feeling in the head, as if the base of

the brain were solidifying into something he might describe as an adamantine headache; then the moment his hand touched hers, an electric current of painful intensity had seemed to flow through his whole arm and out of his finger-tips; and when he touched her back, a similar current—lessened in intensity, perhaps, by the intervention of her dress—had declared itself in the left arm. He had rarely known a sensation more interesting or less agreeable.

In that case, I said, it seemed rather cruel to expose the girl to a repetition of the experience against her will.

"It was cruel," he said, "detestably so. But I couldn't help it. I won't do it again. It isn't as if the poor child had not a bad enough time anyway, without spoiling her holidays. Well, she will be all right to-morrow; and I'll send her some flowers, and make an end of it."

The next day, however, the poor girl was by no means all right, but abed with a feverish headache. Tom sent her flowers, not only that day, but the day after, and so on. In short, instead of making an end of it, he proved only to have made a beginning. In six months they were married.

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The conditions of ideal married life are commonly held to be unquestioning affection, confidence and sympathy, together with an income sufficient to maintain a household in the condition to which it has pleased God to call it. The first year or two of Tom's marriage came nearer this ideal than anything else I have happened to know. They lived in a small house out of town. The neighborhood, as Tom put it, was too respectable to be in the least amusing. So they kept clear of whist-clubs and sewing-circles and what other devices for concentrating ennui were proposed them; and, in short, were all in all to each other. Tom kept hard at work, haunting libraries and laboratories, and now and then printing some scientific article that his friends, unable to understand it, duly admired. His wife meanwhile found time, in the midst of house-keeping, to see a good deal of her friends in town, and thus to keep abreast of gossip; to read all sorts of things for Tom and with him, and thus to keep abreast of what he was at; and to improve her music amazingly. Of old she used to play with exquisite precision; now she began to play so that you could not bear to have her stop.

"I almost hated music once," she said to me. "I only played because I had to. But now I play because Tom likes it; and it is so different."

From one point of view all this was mawkish enough; from another, which for my part I preferred, it was singularly charming. It is not often that one finds a man of brilliant parts deliberately avoiding the

conventional prizes of life to devote all his energy to the pursuit, however unremunerative, he most heartily believes in. It is rarer still, I think, that you find a man, who might marry whom he pleases, preferring a life of almost ascetic simplicity with a woman who stimulates his best nature. Rarest of all, in my experience, is a couple so united to each other, that every time you meet them you feel more distinctly that subtle influence of normal happiness in which all that is most amiable in human nature flourishes best. No wonder that, in spite of the distance, more than one of us liked of an evening to make the journey to Tom's little house, where we were sure of finding man and wife, hearty welcome, excellent talk, and some very good light beer.

After a while, a time came when Tom's wife would slip away rather early, leaving us to talk as late as we pleased. On one such occasion, when we grew rather warm in a discussion, I forget of what, Tom rose and closed the door.

"We shall be keeping her awake," he said, "and she needs sleep."

A minute later she called him. He came back laughing; she liked to hear us, it appeared; it gave her a feeling of security to be thus assured that Tom was awake and at hand. So the door stayed open.

"It is curious," said Tom, as he sat down again, "to observe how closely all emotion is related to the prime element of terror. You know as well as I do how absolutely honest she is. She told me, and she believed, that she didn't want even a closed door between us. But when you stop to analyze a minute, you see that if your nerves are a bit shaky you can't be alone at night — particularly if your consciousness is dulled by sleepiness — without feeling as if everything was coming. Then you want to be sure that somebody is by in case of need; then you go to sleep comfortably. The fact is that love, like any other emotion, can pretty suggestively be reduced to a mode of terror. The prime emotion is simply fear; then you find that somebody else can control you; then you find that the other fellow exercises his control more or less benevolently; then you yield yourself up to him, with an inarticulate feeling that you are safer in his care than in your own; finally you can't get along without him, and this emotion is so strong that you forget what it means. Of course all this is very roughly put, but doesn't it strike you as suggestive?"

It certainly did so impress me, but not quite in an agreeable way.

As a rule, I believe, men dislike babies. Buck rabbits and savage old Saturn, who dispose of their progeny by eating them up, represent, Tom once said, the normal male type. The creative and destructive forces in nature, he held at one time, go together in the masculine character; the conservative, passively resisting forces are the feminine. This gen-

eralization was characteristic of Tom's talk, which often made strangers misunderstand him. They would take it seriously; he never meant it so. Imagination and fancy, he seriously maintained, cannot be given too free rein, provided you always keep in mind that they are not fact. At worst they are amusing in their extravagance; sometimes when you least expect it, they flash a flood of light over matters that, without them, would be quite obscure. When you are not at work, then, you cannot do better than think and talk as boldly as you please; when you are at work the case is different.

When his first child was born, then, Tom seemed rather an exceptional father. He was with the little creature as much as possible; and talked about it as incessantly as the conventional proud parent. The things he remarked, though, were by no means conventional. The moment the child was born he opened an elaborate series of note-books; weight, temperature, pulse, muscular adjustment, heaven knows what not facts, went down day by day.

"You talk," I remember saying, "as if the baby were a document."

"It is," said Tom, "and an uncommonly interesting one. All babies are. This is the first I ever had a fair chance at, and I'm happy to say seems to be absolutely normal. I couldn't have found a better subject for observation. I don't know enough yet to venture an experiment."

I observed, however, that when his wife was about he kept this view of the case to himself. She was a curiously charming mother. The madonna-like purity we used to admire in her eyes, grew stronger and deeper. The child seemed as much a part of her as the child of one of Raphael's virgins. Yet she never spoke of it; from the first she was one of those rare women who can be a mother without a tinge of the nurse-maid. But you could not be with her long without feeling that her life was richer, deeper, better — if better it could be — than of old. And when she was by, Tom talked as little as she of the valuable document he was so busily annotating; but seemed to enter into all her feelings as heartily as if they had been his own. But sometimes, when she was not about, he varied his remarks on the development of the infant mind by shrewd observations concerning that elementary emotion, maternal love.

One day, when the young one was beginning to walk, it went pitching down a flight of steps and was picked up with a broken collar-bone. The nearest surgeon bandaged up its small right arm; and in a day or two the child was playing about with one hand as contentedly as if it had never had a second — a fact which the mother proudly declared to evince at once rare powers of adaptation to circumstances and almost saintly maturity of patience.

On this occasion, I remember, I saw their first serious difference of

opinion. Tom, full of his view of the case, eagerly maintained that she was quite mistaken. The incident only showed how amazingly rudimentary children are. A grown human being would remain for years conscious of the loss of a limb; but here a child could get along without one as easily as a dog could run on three legs. It would be interesting to note at what period in human experience the sense of self becomes so complete as to make a disabling injury, the loss of an integral part of yourself, a consciously annoying inconvenience.

"How *can* you talk so!" she exclaimed, her cheeks flushed with indignation.

"For the fun of it," said Tom, laughing rather nervously.

"It is very poor fun," she said; and left the room.

The next time I saw them they had quite made it up. But Tom, once recurring to the incident, spoke of the curious light it threw on the conflict of elementary emotions — of conjugal love and maternal.

Before the child was three years old, it died. I went with them when they buried it. Only a very few near friends were there. Tom had dug a little grave with his own hands; his wife had wished it. And he laid the little coffin to rest with his own hands, as tenderly as a mother lays her child in its cradle. Then, with his wife beside him, he covered the box with white flowers; and with bare hands began to put back the earth — a spade was too rough to come near the quiet little sleeper. So we left them, kneeling together beside their baby's grave.

When I next went to see them, she kept her room. She could not bear to meet people yet, Tom said; and so fell to talking about her. There was not a day, he said simply, when he did not feel more and more how lucky he had been to find a wife like his.

"We are past the age, of course," he said, "when we can rationally talk of heaven-made matches and the only woman on earth. Intellectually, I suppose, she is very like other people; but emotionally, she is like no one else I have known. No matter what the emotion is — enthusiasm, love, grief, passion — it shows itself in her absolutely unmixed in its purity."

One day Tom asked me if I would like to see some ghosts, "real live ghosts," he added, "that you can talk to and touch — and kiss, if you like." The grin with which he uttered the last phrase was distinctly unpleasant. The suggestion was one you hate in people you care about. But the prospect of ghost-seeing was curious. I went with him to what they call a materialization séance.

The house where this took place was in a part of the town not reputable, yet not disreputable enough to be called by a harsher word than shady. The room was a common-place parlor, scantily furnished

with unmitigated lack of taste. The medium was an untidy woman of forty or so. She was unpleasantly fat, wore her hair in short, oily ringlets, and was dressed in a limp, calico gown. This was what used to be called a Mother Hubbard; that is, it hung straight down from her broad shoulders and capacious bosom, effectually concealing the absence of waist that you could not but infer from her puffy cheeks and pudgy hands. Her assistants were a subdued-looking husband with a red moustache, who attended to the lights and seated the company; and a cadaverous "professor" with dyed hair, who, to use his own phrase, "presided at the parlor-organ."

The company was mixed. Some looked highly respectable, some honest, some neither; none, so far as I could see, particularly intelligent. The most so was a man I had met before — a constant frequenter of a not very fashionable club. He greeted me after the manner of his kind, as if we had been intimate for years.

"Expect anybody to-day?" he whispered confidentially. "I do. Her name's Bertha. She 'most always comes when I'm here. It's all right, you know; she's a spirit."

When we arrived the windows were open, and the afternoon sun streamed into the room. By this light the medium invited us to examine the premises.

"Poke round just as much as you want," she said confidently. "If you find any holes for 'em to come through, I'll be glad to know it. Isaac and me can't find none, and I guess we've hunted. Ain't we, Isaac?"

To which Isaac, her husband, replied that he guessed they had. And the professor assured me, in a whisper, that the investigation of the premises had been exceptionally complete, and that this lady was the most satisfactory medium at whose manifestations he had had the privilege of assisting.

So Tom and I, accompanied by the club-man and Isaac, searched the room as thoroughly as we could; and found the cabinet a simple wooden frame covered with a single thickness of green cotton; and the light carpet and wall-paper, which would show the slightest stain or cut, apparently whole; and the wainscot solid; and in short, everything in the unexceptionable condition that usually precedes jugglery. Then, at Isaac's request, I sealed the folding-doors with my own seal; and Isaac drew the heavy window-curtains and lighted the gas; and the medium entered the cabinet, where the only furniture was a single camp-chair exactly like those ranged without for the circle; and Isaac proceeded to seat the company. This process took a little time; in order that the spirits materialize properly, he told us, it was necessary that positives and negatives be seated alternately. What positives and

negatives were, he went on in answer to a question, he had not time to explain; but he could tell which was which right off, by just looking at 'em a minute. In consequence of his powers of divination, Tom and I, who both proved positives, were separated; and I was seated just in front of the club-man, between an old gentleman with white hair and a stout young woman in black, with an amethyst ring on her fore-finger.

Then Isaac turned down the gas, until I found I could not see the hands of my watch; and the professor, seated at the parlor-organ, began to play "Nearer, my God, to Thee," inviting anybody who could sing to join in the chorus.

As the voices rose in discord, I felt the ringed hand of my neighbor slipping into mine.

"You don't mind holding my hand, do you?" she whispered; "I get awful nervous unless somebody holds my hand. Want to know my name? It's Beatrice. What's yours? Anyhow, I'm going to call you Eddy. I like that name, don't you? My husband's named Eddy, so it comes kind of natural. He's a barber, my husband is; he don't know I come here. He don't believe in spirits. My! there's one! Ain't it wonderful!"

At that moment the darkness in the region of the cabinet had been broken by a perpendicular gleam of white, as if some white creature had suddenly pulled apart the cotton curtains and closed them again. In a minute more this was repeated. The chorus of "Nearer, my God, to Thee" faded out; the professor began to play an endless voluntary of soft minor chords. The fat fingers of Beatrice clutched my hand firmly; and the club-man, leaning forward until his chin touched my shoulder, whispered that we were going to have some fun.

"In a minute," said the voice of Isaac, "they'll get stronger. Here comes a lady spirit. Who did you want, ma'am?"

In the dim light a white figure seemed to emerge from the cabinet. Isaac, whom we could begin to discern vaguely, stepped toward it. Whereupon it suddenly collapsed, as if a wreath of mist had suddenly become over-sensitive to the force of gravitation.

"She'll have to materialize over again," said the voice of the medium from the cabinet. "Won't take long; but she ain't very used to it. Hasn't been long in the spirit world, she says."

"Don't be afraid, ma'am," said Isaac, reassuringly. "What's her name, Charley?"

"Charley's the control," whispered Beatrice. "You know what a control is, don't you? The medium's spirit goes out of her, and the control comes in instead. That's how she can materialize. This medium's got five controls, but Charley's the best. He was a little boy before he passed into the spirit life."

"What's her name, Charley?" repeated Isaac.

"She won't tell," replied the medium. "She's awful timid. Says she's come for father."

"Father!" exclaimed the old man next me. "Is that me? Is it Hattie?"

"That's the name," answered the medium, "Hattie. Yes, it's Hattie. Ask the professor to play a little stronger, so as she'll gather strength to come out."

The minor chords turned into major.

"If you'll step forward, sir," said Isaac, "perhaps it'll help her."

The old man rose unsteadily. "It's my daughter," he said, in a tremulous voice. "She's been gone just a month last Wednesday. It didn't seem right to hope she'd come so soon." He walked trembling toward the cabinet. As he approached, the white figure hastily emerged. We could see it throw two white arms about his neck.

"Hattie!" sobbed the old man; and we heard the sound of long kisses, sympathetically imitated by the club-man, whose chin was again on my shoulder.

From that on, for an hour or two, uncanny creatures came flitting out of the cabinet and otherwise into the room. The Bertha, whom the club-man expected, emerged apparently from the wall at his side, and sat awhile on his knee. In the dim light she appeared a sylph-like young person with loose, golden hair, dressed in something resembling a ballet-costume. A gentleman spirit called for Beatrice. So far as we could make out, he was a tall, unpleasant-looking man with a long, dark beard; but we could really see only three light spots—a face and two hands—standing out against the dark back-ground of the cabinet. Beatrice came back to her seat, however, in great content. It was a gentleman, she informed me, she used to keep company with. He had the consumption. She recognized him because he smelt of cloves.

Nothing, in short, could have been at first sight a more palpable or a much more vulgar imposture. You strained every nerve to make it out; for, vulgar or not, the scene was curious. In the dim light you could never see quite enough to be sure of anything; the constant music of the wheezy parlor-organ confused every sound. Your common-sense told you the thing was a fraud; then, perhaps, a spirit-form emerged from the floor at your very feet. You started, grasped at it. It vanished into nothing, like a wreath of smoke. All about you, along with such elementary animals as the club-man and his blonde Bertha, were figures like the old man at my side. Cruelly, meaninglessly the ones they loved had been torn from them by death; and here they came in half-hopeless belief that the forms they touched,

and the voices they heard, and the kisses they felt in the bewildering darkness were the forms, the voices, the kisses they had lost.

It is hard to describe the sense of relief with which, towards the end of the second hour, I heard Tom's voice speak my name. He had gone to the cabinet, it appeared, at the call of a spirit who was willing to see me too.

I stepped forward. Just within the parted curtains stood a white figure, looking much as an exquisitely-ethereal young girl might have looked in the dim light. You were half tempted to assert that it was really a young girl of rare delicacy and beauty. In her arms she held something wrapped in white.

"Baby," she whispered very faintly, "Baby — papa."

"Just take its hand," said Tom, eagerly.

I touched a little hand that closed about my finger like any young child's. Then, all of a sudden, the curtain closed, and the whole thing was gone.

"They've sunk right through the floor," said the medium's voice. "I'm going now. Good afternoon."

"Good-bye, Charley," said a number of voices from the circle.

In a minute more Isaac had turned up the gas, and somebody had opened the curtains. And the medium, a moment later, emerged from the cabinet with an air of extreme fatigue; and was escorted from the room by Isaac, who remarked that she would have to rest now for about three hours. Then the professor closed the parlor-organ, and the company broke up.

"What did you think of it?" asked Tom, as we walked homeward.

"Very clever humbug," I said. "The most curious thing about it was that it made you feel as if you had been doing something you knew you shouldn't; it was morally enervating."

"Of course," said Tom, "it looks like humbug. But then so does hypnotism, and other things one can do one's self. Did you notice that baby's hand?"

"Quite like any baby's," I said.

"I beg your pardon," said Tom. "It grabbed your finger with only three of its own; it held the little finger in the air. Now don't you remember how characteristic that was of that poor little chap of mine?"

I had never observed the trait in Tom's child, nor had I perceived it in the spirit baby. I had to say so.

"I'm surprised," said Tom. "I had an idea you were more observing."

It was about this time that people began to talk about him. He was growing odd; often his wits seemed gone wool-gathering; he would pass you with hardly a nod; if you spoke, he would answer

irrelevantly. And he had a growing habit of staring at you with an air of cool curiosity ; and of asking all manner of startling questions which transcended the bounds of custom, if not of propriety. Besides, report had it, he was tremendously in debt. To devote yourself to your chosen pursuit is very pretty to think about, they said ; but, if your chosen pursuit does not happen to be a profession in active demand, the chances are it will land you nowhere. A man who would be a man, must guide himself by the practices of mankind, and not by what he thinks such practices ought to be : he must take a regular profession ; if he choose to marry, he must make a sensible match. In short, according to these good people, the gospel of sanity is the gospel of Philistia. And that was one which Tom had always abhorred.

One night, when I happened to be dining with a couple of our friends, the talk turned on Tom. It was melancholy, Henry said, to see him changing so — chasing shadows, up to his ears in all manner of isms, pressed for money ; in short, going straight to the devil.

“Do you know,” asked Dudley, “that I believe your last phrase to be literally true?”

“Literally!” I exclaimed. “In the last eighth of the nineteenth century!”

“If truth is truth,” said Dudley, “time can’t change it. And to me poor Tom’s career is a startling proof, if proof were needed, that what the church teaches is true.”

“I am curious to know,” said Henry, “how you make that out.”

“It is very simple,” said Dudley. “We all know that there are certain limits to human powers. In the material world there are infinite phenomena that scientific experiment and observation can infinitesimally explain ; in the spiritual world there are infinite noumena that nothing can explain this side the grave. Between the two is a shadowy borderland, full of allurements to whomever has within him the spirit of discovery. In a word, I may call this the mystery of the human soul. Here is the battle-ground of good and evil, of the devil and God. How God works or the devil, no human power can understand ; and so, perhaps, to keep our energies at work within fruitful limits, we are forbidden to ask. We may look, see, believe ; that is all. For whomever goes further, the devil stands ready” —

“With hoof and horn?” asked Henry.

“With all the power,” went on Dudley gravely, “that, we know not why, God leaves him still. And if the seeker for truth, however earnest, once yield to temptation and stray beyond the limit God has fixed for human knowledge, nothing, I believe, short of miracle, can save him.”

“From damnation?” asked Henry.

"From damnation," said Dudley, with a sad shake of the head. Then, having delivered his opinion, he lighted a fresh cigar.

"If I weren't afraid of shocking your religious prejudices," said Henry, "I should be tempted to cap your theory with one of mine."

"Go on," said Dudley. "All I have a right to ask is that in such a discussion you talk seriously."

"In all seriousness, then," said Henry, "this is what I think. In what you call the material world, where we all agree that science can work to some purpose, nothing is much clearer nowadays than that there has been a constant progress from what we call lower forms to what we call higher. In what you call the mystery of the human soul, and I call psychology, I see no need of any new hypothesis. Intelligence evidently starts in the blind terror of I don't know what aquatic forms of life which, at some period of their nervous development, grows conscious of efforts to get away from things that want to eat them. By and by creatures grow aware of each other; great masses of them with a common aim act together, do the same thing at the same time, combine first in flight like a school of young fish, then in other things like swarms of bees or migrating birds. As forms grow higher, complexity of action increases and along with it power of communication. It is all nonsense to pretend that animals can't communicate; they can and do."

"All this," said Dudley, "is very interesting; but we were not discussing the languages of the brute creation."

"Your phrase," said Henry, "shows how little you see what I am coming to. Language, above all other things, is what distinguishes man from what we call brutes. Language they have not; they communicate by other means than articulate sounds."

"What means?" asked Dudley.

"I don't care to know," said Henry, "and in a few minutes you will see why. Articulate language, invented by some remote ancestor of ours, has proved so vastly better than any other means of communication, that in the human race all others have been disused. The higher the human race, the more complete the disuse. But human beings can no more rid themselves of vestiges of their psychologic part than horses of their splint-bones. Every man of us has somewhere in the depths of his consciousness, rudimentary traces of the powers by which his swimming and flying ancestors told one another that trouble was brewing."

"How do you know all this?" asked Dudley.

"I don't," said Henry. "I believe it."

"Ah," said Dudley, with a smile.

"Wait a minute," went on Henry, with growing warmth. "As a

matter of acknowledged fact, you will admit that what we call the moral sense — high ideals of conduct and all that sort of thing — exists chiefly in the higher forms of man. Honesty, truth, duty — devotion to these in the face of temptation, by which I mean the contrary influence of environment — are found only among races, I might almost say individuals, whose power of accurate articulation is relatively very high. In other words, in that infinitely complex phenomenon we call the human mind, language and morality are enormously intertwined."

"Well?" said Dudley, whose politeness could not conceal an accent of rather contemptuous incredulity.

"Well," said Henry, "I should suppose that I had shown why a man cannot study and excite the rudimentary vestiges of his pre-linguistic powers of communication without, as a rule, playing the devil with his moral sense. That is why mesmerists, and mediums, and medicine-men are such knaves and liars. That is why, until we know enough to distinguish between survivals and developments, we shall be safest to let experimental psychology alone."

"So you agree," asked Dudley, "that it should be let alone?"

"At least for the present," said Henry.

"After all," said Dudley, "we differ much less than I supposed."

"At any rate," said Henry, "we agree that Tom's whole career has led straight to his abuse of his wife."

"Abuse of his wife!" I exclaimed. "He does nothing of the kind."

But both insisted that I was mistaken. Quite what form his abuse took they could not tell; but everybody knew that he abused her.

The charge was too monstrous to be kept from Tom. Thoughtless acts of his might give it color and do lasting harm. The next time I saw him, I blurted out the whole thing, which he received with amazing coolness.

"Well," he said, "what can I do about it?"

"We must prove somehow," I said hotly, "that it isn't true."

"That what isn't true?"

"That you abuse your wife."

"But I'm by no means sure it isn't," said he. "And I confess I don't care much. I am past the point where I let sentiment interfere with experiment."

"Good heavens, man!" I cried, "what do you mean?"

Tom looked at me critically a few seconds; then he turned up his eyes with that air of impersonal reflection that was beginning to be characteristic. "I don't see," he said at last, "why I shouldn't show you. Come to my house a little after eight, and see for yourself."

A little after eight, then, I came, with feelings terribly different from

the certainty of ideal domesticity that used to attract me thither in the old times. The first sound that greeted me at the door was a crashing chord on the piano, instinct as music can be with vicious ill-temper. Then followed the sound of voices rising in anger. My entrance to the room did not check them.

"You'll play that again!" Tom was saying roughly, "and you'll play it decently."

"Shall I?" exclaimed his wife, in a shrill tone I had never suspected in her voice. "I should like to know why."

"Because I choose," said Tom.

"O!" she cried. "To please you? I think I see myself." And she laughed noisily.

I felt as if I was in a nightmare, "Tom" — I began.

He turned with a curt nod. "There you are," he said. "Don't talk. Just watch. You'll be interested. Look here," he went on, turning to his wife, who had never stopped the shrill laugh. "I won't have that racket."

"I didn't make it to please you," she answered. "I made it because I know you hate it."

"You won't make it again," bellowed Tom.

"Won't I? Why not?"

"I won't let you!"

"Oh, really!" and she began to laugh again.

"Stop!" roared Tom, raising his arm, as if to threaten her.

I started forward to check him. "Sit still!" he said quickly. "It's dangerous to interfere. It would frighten her horribly."

Frighten her! I thought. The poor girl sat cowering like a terrified child. "Don't," she was whimpering. "Don't. Please don't." In that one word I found something familiar — the first suggestion in this amazing scene of anything less strange than the most fantastic of dreams. In an instant I remembered: "Don't" was the word she uttered when, years ago, before they were engaged, he had driven her into hysterics by "willing." The tone was much the same. "Don't," she was whimpering, like a frightened child.

"Play, then," said Tom, "and play decently."

Trembling she turned to the piano and began to play. Her execution had all its old metallic brilliancy; but not a touch of that wonderful sympathetic beauty her playing had acquired in the early years of her married life.

"That's right," said Tom. "I knew you would."

She quivered from head to foot, and looked over her shoulder at him with a face that expressed combined fear and hatred, as I have never seen them expressed before or since. But when she caught his eye and

saw his arm brought down with a rough gesture of command, she struck the notes more firmly than ever.

"Don't you dare stop," he said, "till I tell you." Then he turned quietly to me. He was smiling rather coolly, as if he found the situation amusing. "Evidently," he said in a friendly whisper, "you don't understand what's going on. In a minute, I'll explain. But I want you to see the whole show first."

I was burning with indignation. "I have seen more than enough" — I began.

"Bah!" laughed Tom. "You haven't seen the whole. Sit still a minute longer."

"Sit still!" I exclaimed.

"For heaven's sake, *keep* still at any rate," he interrupted. "If you startle her, there will be the devil to pay."

All this time, I remembered, she had paid me no attention. Apparently she had not noticed that I was come.

"Just sit still," went on Tom, "and watch. Stop playing!"

She stopped.

"Look me in the face."

She whirled about on the piano-stool and looked him straight in the eye. Every feature of her face was distorted with passion.

"Now tell me what you think of me. Out with it."

What she said I cannot write down. Where she learned the language she poured forth, I cannot guess. There is no oath, I should think, no foul word, no invention of evil passion, that she did not fling in his face.

Tom listened coolly. "In plain English," he said, "you hate me."

"Hate you?" she cried. "Damn you!"

"Hold your tongue!" said Tom.

She cowered into trembling silence.

"Now go to sleep," he said.

Her eyes closed; her features relaxed into the passivity of sleep; her head sank on her breast. She would have fallen from her seat; but Tom was at her side. With all his old tenderness he lifted her gently to her feet, led her to the sofa, and laid her down there. Then he stroked her forehead, and she began to breathe softly and gently like a sleeping child. Then Tom turned to me, who was too amazed to speak.

"Curious! isn't it?" he said. "Hypnotism. She is the best subject I could possibly have found."

"Curious," I said, "it is damnable."

"Nonsense," said Tom. "She doesn't know anything about it. In her natural state she is as extravagantly fond of me as ever."

"My God, Tom!" I cried again. "How can you play these tricks with such love as hers?"

"It's only when she is hypnotized, man, that I make her hate me. Thanks to the experiment, I have pretty well ascertained that there is no earthly relation between the natural state and the hypnotic."

"But, Tom," I said, "she is your wife."

"Exactly," said he. "Look here." He went to the sofa and leaned over her lovingly. He passed his hand over her face. He called her by name. "Wake up, dear," he said, cheerily.

She opened her eyes. They had all their old purity.

"O, Tom," she said with a smile, "I must have been asleep."

"Yes," he said, "you have been asleep."

"And you have been keeping quiet, you dear boy, for fear of waking me."

"Yes, dear," he said, gently. "Are you tired still?"

"So tired, Tom," said she, "I don't know what makes me so."

"Then you had better go to sleep again," he said, leaning over her. She put both arms about his neck and kissed him. In an instant more she was asleep again. She had not noticed me at all.

"No trace of it left, you see," said Tom, turning to me. "At least nothing but nervous fatigue. It takes some time to sleep that off. Come into the dining-room and we'll have a cigar."

"Once for all," said Tom, as I declined his cigar, "we might as well understand each other. I have no idea of discussing any questions of conduct."

"But Tom," I said, "I can't leave you without one word more."

"I don't ask you to," said he. "I'm a bit excited and feel like talking. If you choose to listen, I don't mind telling you what I'm at."

So I stayed and listened a long time, growing sick at heart.

The very names of what he talked about told how utterly we were out of touch. Occultism, in the hundred forms I had always thought mere varieties of imposture, was to him as real as astronomy or geology. I might call it nonsense to the end of time, he said, but I could not make it so. The fact of imposture, so often entangled with these phenomena, he did not deny; it was a constant symptom, but a phase that a careful observer could eliminate as surely as a miner could rid his gold of quartz. Whoever denied the existence of magic, and witchcraft, and spiritualism, and theosophy, and what not else, simply refused to recognize fact; he was like the atheist who maintains that nothing exists beyond what he can perceive,—like the unhatched chicken, swearing that the universe is bounded by his egg-shell.

Take, for example, one subject he happened at the moment to be studying—automatic writing. And out came from a secretary any

number of loose sheets of paper, covered with mad-looking scrawls. Every one of them, he declared, had been written under his very eyes, some with planchette, some with common pen or pencil. Some he had written himself, letting his hand run as it would, while he thought or talked of other matters; these writings of his, by the way, had a curious tendency of their own, hardly compatible with a high state of morals. He gave me his word he had had no idea what he was doing; as yet he did not pretend to explain what he had done, but there was no getting away from the fact that he had done it.

Or look at this series, he went on — perhaps the most remarkable he had. His wife had written them at different times, but mostly in the presence of an interesting old fellow whose state of mind he had for some time been studying attentively. The case was worth detailing.

“This old fellow,” he went on, “is a spiritualist. He implicitly believes whatever he cannot understand to be a direct communication from a dead daughter of his. In fact, I have ascertained by experiment that if you assert a thing comes from her, he will ask no questions.”

“You don’t mean,” I exclaimed, “that you have deliberately lied to the man!”

“I mean,” he answered, “that I am in the midst of a remarkably interesting series of experiments. Nothing is plainer in spiritualism than that a necessary condition of proper manifestation is unquestioning belief on the part of somebody concerned. Of course I must keep sure that my old friend’s faith does not waver. If it did, the conditions would be changed.”

I began an indignant protest, which he interrupted by reminding me that applied ethics was barred.

When the old fellow lost his daughter, Tom went on, he had taken violently to mediums. Tom had met him at various séances, where the daughter had generally appeared, but without giving very cogent proofs of her identity. When you asked the father how he had known her, he could give no particular reason beyond that she had named herself. It was pretty clear, too, that he did not exactly relish the company in which she turned up. “Like many interesting things,” said Tom, “spirits are undeniably shady. Well, now look here.”

He handed me a sheet of paper on which were scrawled a number of designs with a strong family likeness. “My wife did all these in one evening,” he said, “with planchette.”

I saw nothing in them that suggested connection with what he had been saying. I told him so.

“What are those figures?” he asked.

“Straight lines,” I said, “with loops above them.”

“In other words,” he said, “hats. The dead girl’s name was Hattie.”

"Was the old man he told of, the one who had sat next me at the séance?" I asked.

"Of course it was. He ought to have remembered that I had seen him for myself. I could not fail to recognize what an admirable subject he was for experiment." And he went on with his story.

Just to test the old man's credulity he had shown him this paper, asking if he supposed the designs could have been inspired by his daughter's spirit. The old man had instantly declared them so inspired; beyond doubt he held them to be phonetic signatures of a kind much affected by spirits. He requested at once to be taken to the medium through whom the communication had been received. The chance was too good to be lost. Tom had taken him home.

"And would your wife help you in such a business?" I asked.

"To tell the truth," said Tom, "I haven't let her know the whole story."

"Tom," I said, "for heaven's sake stop doing what you don't dare let her know."

"Dare!" he laughed, "I've kept her in the dark because I want to observe the relations of innocence and credulity. You don't find such conditions once in a century."

"But how can she help seeing what she is about?"

"Well, I thought of hypnotism" —

"Hypnotism!" I cried, full of the hideous scene just past.

"You see yourself it wouldn't have done. It would have mixed up two separate matters. So I got some spirits to order the old fellow not to speak to her."

"You let yourself do that?"

"Certainly. She thinks he is scientific. And he sits mum as you please, receiving communications. They come like mad. I'm getting hugely interested. Look here — and here."

He held out a handful of papers covered with the ugly scrawls. I pushed them aside.

"Tom," I said, "can't I make you understand that what you are doing is simply rascally?"

He shrugged his shoulders, gathering the papers together. "Call me what you please," he said. "Only remember that it was by just such names that people called Columbus, and Galileo, and Darwin."

The rest of the story has been told in all the newspapers. It was beginning when Tom and I had that last talk.

The old man began to fail in faith. Other mediums materialized Hattie. If this one could not do so, there must be a screw loose. Thereupon Tom intimated that Hattie might be induced to materialize

in his little parlor; and before long she did. Tom's wife, who on such occasions the old man said looked curiously different from usual, would retire into the parlor-closet. Tom would turn down the gas. In a few minutes Hattie would emerge in extremely affectionate mood, talk with the utmost fluency, and at last would have to be ordered into the closet again. For, if she stayed too long without, Tom explained, direful consequences would ensue in the spirit-world. At the close of these séances the medium was always found fast asleep.

These phenomena proved so much more satisfactory than any others, that the old man insisted on paying well for them. At first Tom held back; then took money; then asked for it; then had all manner of property secretly conveyed to him. And then came the crash, and the law-courts, and the shameful flight of which the papers were so full.

The evidence was overwhelming that husband and wife had joined in the most vulgar of frauds. They escaped together, no one quite knows whither. But I heard from Tom once. A letter came asking me to attend to some formal matters that for old times' sake I was glad to. And in it were the last words I have heard from him.

"As to what has happened," he wrote, "you and I should never agree. If I had it to do over again, I should do it exactly as before. There was no other way practically to maintain the full strength of his belief. Besides, I needed the money more than he did, and gave him value received in satisfaction—or should have given it, if those confounded relatives had not interfered.

"Happily my other series of experiments is not interrupted. My wife is a more interesting study than ever. Of course, when she materialized she was thoroughly hypnotized. In her normal condition, she believes the whole trouble to be a malicious lie. She knows, she says, that the charge against her is false; *ergo*, so is the charge against me. In her hypnotized condition, she naturally has no idea that there is any charge at all. The two states, I am convinced, are as foreign as two independent human beings. On this point I shall be heard from one of these days."

KASPER CRAIG.

By Maud Howe.

It was at a London flower-show that Leonard Ebury first met the strange old man who was destined to exert so strong an influence over his life. It was in mid-May, the weather was on its best behavior, and Hurlingham was a paradise of bloom and perfume. In the great tents where the roses were displayed, on the banks of the river and in the club-house, scores of gorgeously-dressed ladies flitted about among the flowers, like so many brilliant butterflies. The band was playing an intoxicating Strauss waltz; the sun was shining brightly, its warmth tempered by a gentle breeze from the river.

Leonard was alone; in all that gay company, there was not one person whose face he had ever seen before. He had been in London but two days, and had not yet made an acquaintance. From his seat beneath a spreading oak-tree he watched the jocund scene, forgetting his own loneliness in contemplating the ever-changing crowd before him.

"May I share your seat, sir?" said a voice at his side; and as he moved to make room for the owner of the voice, his eyes fell upon a man who was an incongruous figure in the gay assemblage.

"You seem to be alone like myself," said the new-comer. "And if I am not mistaken, you are a stranger in London as well."

"You are not mistaken. I never felt so much alone in all my life as I have for the last hour among all these pleasure-seekers."

"Your interest, like mine, is in the flowers, I fancy. That is another point of resemblance between us: but we are in the minority to-day, sir. Most of the people"—here he indicated a group of ladies—"have come here to exhibit their own unfolding or unfolded charms." The stranger spoke in a smooth, courteous voice, his last words followed by an odd, chilly laugh which gave the young American a singular sensation of cold.

"To be quite frank with you, sir," Leonard replied, "I will confess that no higher motive than a desire to kill time brought me to Hurlingham this morning. The flowers are very interesting, no doubt. But I have just returned from the home of flowers, where the hybiscus and the flame-acacias flaunt their gorgeous colors through the dark forests,

where the airy orchids hang from palm and fern-tree, but where the sight of a fair woman's face is as rare as snow in July."

"Of what country do you speak?"

"Of the island of Java, where I have passed the last five years. These human flowers have a greater charm for me than the finest roses. Look, now, at that lady in the sapphire dress! Is she not as beautiful, as graceful as yonder peacock, sunning himself on the balcony? See! He spreads his fan, and she turns her lovely head in the sun, and lets its light glisten on her fair curls!"

"I perceive that you are a student of nature like myself. The lady and the bird belong, indeed, to the same class of beings. She wears the colors of his plumage, and imitates his graceful posturing—and see, further, how this woman has found her kin in the other kingdoms. She wears diamonds, hard, sparkling stones, whose glitter masks their shallowness; and she carries camellias: showy, scentless, heartless as herself."

The stranger spoke with a sudden energy.

"Do you know the lady's name?" inquired the young American, who was growing interested in the conversation.

"I never saw her before, but I know her species," answered the stranger with some bitterness. Leonard, who had his full share of the national trait of curiosity, regarded his new acquaintance with a growing interest. He was a tall man, and very slender, but much bent with age. His long, grayish hair and beard floated about his thin face, which wore a greenish pallor and was characterized by an expression of eager inquiry. Whatever else he might be, the man was surely a seeker.

"I perceive that you are no common person," continued the old man, "and I believe that some of my theories may be of interest to you. They are the result of a long life devoted to the study of nature. If I have learned some of her secrets, it is in return for years of labor.

"First in importance I hold the great law of harmony, which runs through all nature and is recognized by men under the blind name of destiny. Every created thing is in harmony with some creation in every other sphere of nature; is, in fact, one note in a vast chord which echoes through the whole universe. It is the first unconscious effort of man to find his kindred elements in the other spheres. Only when this is accomplished does he attain his full development; not till he learns to commune and borrow from these kindred substances in the mineral and vegetable worlds the qualities which they possess, does he reach the zenith of his power."

"You interest me more than I can express," said the young man, falling in with the stranger's mood with the facile adaptability of his

race. "This new science is allied to astrology. I believe that a man cannot fail to be influenced by the stars under whose light he was born; and if these remoter forces affect his destiny, why not the nearer ones of which you speak?"

The old man nodded assent, and Leonard begged him to unfold more of his theory.

"All in good time, young sir. I feel that I have found in you one whom I may at once profit by and befriend. If I am not mistaken, you are not in the best of circumstances. Come, now! Would you not be glad of a position which would fall in with your taste for travel, and at the same time reward you handsomely?"

Leonard blushed under the keen gray eyes fixed on him from beneath the old man's shaggy brows. He was conscious that his clothes were somewhat shabby, but the old man's dress was in a much worse condition. "He may be a lunatic, and he may be a rich eccentric," thought Leonard. "Well! I have been a soldier of fortune too long to resign my commission now."

"Sir, you have guessed my case," he said, frankly. "This morning I had but two guineas in the world."

"And you spent one of them to gain admittance to the flower-show! Come, I like your spirit. I have often spent my last ha'penny to buy a posy. I will show you something that will repay your generous outlay. Half his fortune on the mere *chance* of seeing a beautiful flower!"

The old man rose as he spoke, and led the way to the large tent.

"Here you will see an illustration of what I have just said" — they were now among the prize roses. "Women are more material than we are, and the coarser ones have little sympathy with flowers, preferring to find their counterparts in the grosser mineral world. Their passion for gems is, perhaps, the strongest sentiment of which they are capable. Those of the finer mould only aspire to the higher, more spiritual union with the flora; and even these are keyed to the note of the more fleshy flowers. Women and roses are forever coupled together. Women have always been the most successful rose-growers. I myself first cultivated the rose, a flower of a low order of beauty nearly allied to the sensuous side of man. It is the flower that the lover brings to the tryst, that the beloved wears as a love-signal in her breast, the votive-offering which dresses the altars of Cytherea and of Eros. See that young woman breathing the fragrance of that deep-hearted *Gloire de Dijon*. Its perfume affects her like wine, or like a lover's kiss."

"I think them a most charming pair," said Leonard, stoutly.

"Doubtless; I should have thought so at your age. The trivial passions of youth are necessary to strengthen us for the mightier passions of age. You now, who love a fair face better than all the flowers

in the world, will hardly believe that your admiration of woman is a puny sentiment beside my passion for my flowers—the only one that remains to me after a lifetime of passions.”

“Which of the flowers did you choose as your favorite when you discarded the rose?” inquired Leonard.

“All in good time, friend,” answered the enthusiast. “At first I gave myself to the lily; a purer blossom, but still too earthly. It is the flower we lay in dead hands, the symbol of ality.”

“How can we learn to find our floral affinities?” asked Leonard, curious to hear more of his companion’s wild talk.

“How lightly you ask me for a secret that I have given my life to learn! And yet it is possible that I may some day share it with you, if you can do the service I shall ask of you. Be satisfied that you have learned what few men ever dream of—that the secret exists, and may be learned. Bonaparte knew it. What mighty councils he held with the violet, who shall ever tell? Not till he became inflated, vain-glorious, worshipping his power and ignoring the source from which it was drawn, did Napoleon fail. On the morning of Waterloo, why was the familiar knot of violets missing from his coat?”

“I follow you,” cried Leonard. “The corn-flower of the German Kaiser, the primrose of Lord Beaconsfield—these may have been the most powerful allies of these two great men!”

“Even so,” rejoined the visionary. “Did you never suspect that there lurked in the red and white roses of York and Lancaster a deeper significance than the dull historians, who treat them as the mere badges of the rival factions, have ever dreamed?”

They had left the rose-tent, and now entered a small building whose interior was arranged in imitation of a tropical forest. Palm-trees and giant ferns lifted their tall tops to the vaulted roof; the ground was carpeted with moss; a pool of water was filled with rare aquatic plants, some of which Leonard recognized as natives of the tropical countries where he had lived. Amidst the foliage were gorgeous tropical birds; and high up in the branches of the taller trees hung the wonderful orchids, to which the miniature forest merely served as a background.

“Capital!” cried Leonard. “This is the work of an artist! I could almost fancy myself in the forests of Java again. Look at that beautiful night-moth! I have seen it growing from the highest branches of a copal-tree, so lofty, that the flower twinkled from its leaves like a white star. And that cypripedium—I never saw a more perfect specimen! I almost fancy that I shall see through yonder window the mighty outlines of Java’s volcano, crowned with clouds and fire, and draped with its royal purple haze.”

The old man was delighted with the youth's enthusiasm. He shook him warmly by the hand, saying :

"Away with hesitation ! Let us at once make our compact of friendship. Never was there a fitter partnership. You are young; a poet, an enthusiast. I am old, and a little wiser than you, possessing experience which you lack, lacking the fire of youth which is still yours. You are poor and I am rich. Lend me your strong sinews, your young, active limbs, and I will give you all that you require to live like the sybarite and the adventurous spirit that you are. What say you? Are the terms fair?"

"More than fair; generous!" answered Leonard. "But what is the nature of the service you require of me? I am, as you surmise, an adventurer, and frankly declare myself to be one who has lived too late; a knight-errant of the nineteenth century, seeking for adventure wherever I may find it; stipulating only that I may keep unspotted my honest name, the only inheritance my poor parents left me."

"Come now! Is it likely I should ask you to rob a hen-roost?" said the old man, testily. "If I were in want of a villain, I should hardly give a chance acquaintance like yourself the power to denounce me. I have made my offer; it is for you to accept or decline it."

Just as Leonard was about to refuse this preposterous proposition of an unquestioning obedience, a young girl passed by and stopped to admire a beautiful nepenthe growing near him. She lifted a sweet, pale face to the flower; and as she stood thus, her slight figure reaching upward, she looked at Leonard whose eyes were fastened on her. The young man's heart stood quite still, and then gave a mighty throb. The girl's large, soft eyes returned his intense gaze frankly; then their expression changed to one of pleading; then they were hidden by the smooth, white lids. A faint wave of color spread over her transparent cheek, and she drew a sudden, long breath which loosened the modest moss-rose in her bosom so that it fell to the ground. Leonard dropped upon his knee and, kneeling at her feet, restored the flower to her. She thanked him with a gentle inclination of the head and another tremulous glance. No word had been spoken. A careless observer would only have seen that a pretty young girl had let fall a rose, which a good-looking young man had picked up and returned to her with a rather extravagant politeness. But in that brief moment this youth and this girl, strangers till then, looked into each other's eyes and knew that they were lovers for all time.

"So, Mary Heather, you have come to see your friends in their new surroundings. That is well; but do not linger too long amid this rank vegetation. I shall not return until late to-night."

It was the old man who thus addressed the new-comer.

"All will be ready, sir," she answered, in a voice that sounded to Leonard like that of his dead mother. She turned to go, but at the entrance started back. A scorpion lay on the threshold.

"Do not be afraid! I took care to draw his sting; and that green snake you saw gliding up the palm is as harmless as those pretty lizards. I wished to make the imitation as true to nature as possible," continued the old man turning to Leonard, "and I have been at great pains to be exact in these minor details. But you have not given me your answer. Are we to be friends, or do our paths separate here?"

Leonard's resolve was already taken. Mary Heather had disappeared. His best chance of ever seeing her again was through this strange old man, who seemed on such intimate terms with her.

"As my Mistress Chance has led me to you, sir, I will not break faith with her, nor with you. I accept your offer," he exclaimed, holding out his hand.

"Good!" cried the stranger, laying his cold hand in Leonard's warm grasp. "I am rarely deceived in a face. My name is Kasper Craig. How are you called?"

Leonard handed him his card; and after giving the young American an appointment for the next evening, Kasper Craig left him and melted, like a gray shadow, into the gay crowd that was beginning to pour into the orchid-grove.

"Who was that old man I was just talking with?" asked Leonard, of one of the attendants.

"I don't wonder you ask," replied the man. "I never saw him outside his own garden before. That was Kasper Craig, the greatest orchid-collector in the world. This is his exhibit. Folks say that he is a little touched here," tapping his forehead significantly.

Ebury soon after left the festival of flowers, and made his way home to his poor lodgings. He could remember Mary Heather's sweet face better in his bare attic-chamber than in that gay crowd, out of which she had dawned for a moment on his sight, like a modest country daisy astray in a garden of splendid court-flowers.

The next evening he knocked at the door of a poor cottage in Hammersmith a little before the hour named by Kasper Craig. The house was a crazy old affair, but behind it there was a large, well-kept garden and some glass-houses, the whole inclosed by high, brick walls.

He rapped several times without receiving any attention from those within. After a delay of some minutes, the door was cautiously opened and a small, withered hand was put out toward him. Leonard seized it in his own and held it firmly.

"Let me go," cried a shrill voice. "Give me what you have brought for Kasper Craig, and let me go."

"I have brought nothing but my muscles," said Leonard, pushing the door open, "and those are the only things I possess that Kasper Craig has asked me to use in his service."

The young man had forced himself into the dimly-lighted passage. He still held the little hand in his; but when he saw the crippled child to whom it belonged, his grasp grew more tender.

"Come, my boy," he said gently; "play no pranks with me. I have come by appointment to see Kasper Craig. Lead me to him."

"What is your name?" said the cripple, suspiciously.

"Leonard Ebury. What is your's?"

"Edward Heather," answered the child. "You are to wait till Kasper Craig returns. You can either sit here, or go out into the garden." Outside, the weather was damp and it was beginning to drizzle; inside, the prospect of the bare passage, which contained nothing but a dusty hat-rack and a few botanical prints hanging on the walls, was hardly more inviting.

Leonard laughed and patted the child's thin hand.

"You are not very hospitable, Edward; but if you will stay and talk with me, we will sit on the stairs till Kasper Craig comes home. Is Mary Heather your sister?"

"Yes," said the boy, fixing his large, hollow eyes on Ebury with an intent, questioning gaze. "What do you want with my Mary?"

"Only to see her, to speak with her. If that cannot be, to know if she is in this house."

The boy's eyes seemed to read Leonard's very soul.

"No," he said, shaking his head with an air of elfin sagacity. "No, Leonard Ebury, you cannot see her. If you are a friend of Kasper Craig's, you shall not see my Mary."

"I am no friend of Kasper Craig's. I have come to do some work for him, for which he pays me. Do you understand? If I could see your sister — if only once — I care not if I never see that strange old man again."

"Why?" said the child. "Why do you want to see Mary? Do you love her, too?"

Leonard trembled under those sad, questioning eyes. He could not have lied to the child to save his life.

"Yes, Edward, I love Mary Heather."

"Are you her sweetheart?" whispered the child, angrily. "She never told me of you."

"I never spoke to her — but I have seen her. I love her, and I believe that she loves me."

"And will you take us away from here, away from Kasper Craig — now — to-night — if I let you see Mary?"

They are all mad in this house, thought Ebury ; but he answered the child soothingly.

"If Mary wishes it, yes. But take me to her. He may return at any moment."

"Come then," said the child resolutely, leading the way up the dark stairway. Leonard groped his way behind him as best he might. Edward tapped lightly at a door at the end of the passage, which was immediately opened by Mary Heather.

"There she is," said the child, pointing to his sister. "Say what you have to say quickly."

"I am afraid that I have intruded upon you, Miss Heather," Ebury began. "I came by appointment to seek Kasper Craig, and I find that I am before the hour."

"Come in," said the young girl. "You are welcome to sit here till Kasper Craig returns. He will not be long."

Leonard still hesitated on the threshold, hat in hand. He felt all unworthy to enter that white, maiden room, so rich in purity, so poor in all else.

"Come in. Mary says you are to come in," said the child, petulantly, pushing Ebury into the room and shutting the door. "How cold it is ! I will stir the fire while you talk."

"He is very nervous to-day. Do not notice him," said Mary in an undertone, as she placed a chair for the visitor near the fire and took her place at a work-table. She was soon stitching at some coarse work, and the home-like air of the large, pleasant chamber, together with Mary's quiet grace and dignity, soon made Leonard forget the child's wild talk. Ebury learned that the brother and sister were orphans and dependent upon Kasper Craig, to whom they were distantly related. Mary told him their simple history in answer to his adroit questions.

She barely remembered her parents, both of whom died when Edward was a baby. The children assisted Kasper Craig in caring for his orchids ; and in addition to this, Mary made drawings from certain of the rarer specimens. Her easel, with an unfinished sketch of a white orchid, stood near the window. The flower from which the drawing was made, bloomed from the branch of a tree hanging against the wall near the little white bed. The great, tropical flower hung languidly from the fragment of dead wood. It was unlike any orchid Leonard had ever seen. As he was admiring the weird blossom, the door opened and Kasper Craig entered.

"You were prompt indeed, friend," said the famous collector with his chilly laugh. "But I shall not apologize for keeping you waiting, for my tardiness has given you a glimpse of my greatest treasure, my

last discovery. Tell me, frankly. Have you ever seen anything as beautiful as this in Java, or anywhere else?"

"I have certainly never seen anything like this orchid," said Leonard, "but I am not sure that I think it beautiful. It is such a savage-looking flower! Look at that open mouth and throat—they have almost a human look. Those coarse, white spikes are like teeth. They would hold fast and devour any unfortunate bee that came in search of honey."

"It is allied to the *dionæa muscipula*, which, as you know, feeds upon insects. But this flower has a much more highly-developed organism. In evolution, it is as far from the Venus's fly-trap as you are from the river-drift man. Linnæus, and Gray, and all the famous botanists between them, have failed to establish the line between animal and vegetable life. There is a good and sufficient cause for this: the line does not exist. There is no break in the chain of creation. The orchid stands midway between the plant and the animal. It is capable of movement and it is carnivorous, but it has not yet attained to its full development. It is the highest and latest expression of nature, the crowning triumph of creation. This hybrid is the result of the experiments of thirty years of my life. Step by step, I have raised the standard of its race's organism. This wonderful creature already sleeps, breathes, moves, feeds itself like many of its predecessors. It will do more. Hitherto it has been nourished only by the grosser forms of animal life: flies and other insects. Deprived of this sustenance, it will grasp the strong, subtle life-essence which belongs only to some few of the higher animal species."

Leonard's attention had wandered from the subject of the old man's discourse. His eyes were fixed on Mary Heather, who was sitting at the other end of the room, stitching steadily at her work. Her soft hair, her dewy, violet eyes, her pure, flower-like face were already more familiar to him than his own features; and yet, every time that his eyes fell upon her loveliness, it seemed that a rich, new treasure had been given to him.

"You are looking at Mary Heather," said the collector. "You may well look at that girl. What a rare, orchid-like growth she is! Her father was a drunkard. Her mother, an overworked seamstress. From their union sprang this perfect flower. Can you fancy that her delicate tints, her perfect form, her airy grace, were inherited from a sot and a drudge? No, no; nature does not perform miracles; there are causes for all her so-called phenomena. The scientists have not yet learned the A, B, C, of her wonderful methods. From her babyhood Mary Heather has lived among my plants. Her mother would bring the child in her cradle in the morning, and leave her with me all day. She has

breathed the breath of the rarest flowers that the world has ever seen. She has drawn her life from them. Her flesh is more like their flesh than like yours or mine. Frail growths, that have never before lived out of their native soil, have flourished under her hands; plants that have ever been considered sterile in a state of cultivation have grown fruitful under her care; for she is of their kind, and knows the secrets of their mystic marriage-rites. How closely the two forms of life approach each other! This girl is the flower of the human family. If we could produce an animal-flower, with more animal attributes even than the *dionœa*, should we not have found the link in the chain that binds the two kingdoms together? Would not the man who should produce that flower, who should publish that great secret to the world, be remembered with Galileo, with Newton, with Darwin?"

Kasper Craig had whispered this flood of wild talk into the ear of the young American, who was now thoroughly convinced of the old man's insanity. Leonard looked at Mary and Edward Heather. The boy was crouching in his invalid-chair, his fearful eyes fixed upon Kasper Craig, his whole figure expressive of a terrified anticipation. Mary had laid down her sewing, and sat leaning back in her arm-chair, pale and weary, but showing no sign of the brother's nervous agitation. The sweet, faint color had faded from her cheeks. She was drooping like the lilies in his mother's garden at home, on a hot, summer afternoon. He thought of Kasper Craig's comparison. She was, indeed, a human flower.

"What you say is very ingenious, at least," said Leonard, "and I am pleased to have seen this rare flower, of which Miss Heather is making so faithful a drawing. But how is this?" He had stepped close to the little bed, and in passing touched the white pillow, leaving a benediction on the fair linen. "The artist is painting the flower white, while the orchid surely has a faint rose tint on the lower petals."

"I had not noticed that," said Mary. "Is there not some reflection that gives it that color? I am quite sure the flower was as white as snow when I began the drawing yesterday."

"It was white, Mary!" said Kasper Craig. "But see for yourself. The young man is not mistaken."

There was a ring of joyous exultation in his chilly voice, at the sound of which the cripple cowered in his chair. Mary Heather came slowly to the old man's side, and moved the flower into a better light. The rose tint was now unmistakable. Leonard noticed how white and worn the girl looked, and determined for her sake to break up the interview.

"It grows late, sir," he said. "Let us not longer intrude upon Miss Heather, who seems in need of repose. We have not yet spoken of the matter that brought me here to-night."

At this reminder Kasper Craig led the way down-stairs; at the doorway Leonard was detained by the child, who had darted from his chair the moment the old man left the room.

"Remember that you are to take us away, soon," he murmured, "very soon, or it will be too late. Mary will die."

Leonard lifted the misshapen little creature in his arms and soothed him tenderly, whispering in his ear:

"I will come again, soon. Tell her—tell your sister—that I am her friend, and would give my life to help her if she were in trouble."

"Are you coming, young man?" called Kasper Craig from the stairs; and with a last, lingering look at Mary, her lover left the room.

The two men sat together until midnight; and when they parted, it had been agreed between them that Leonard Ebury should start for Bogota, in search of a rare specimen of the South American orchid, as soon as his outfit could be arranged. He received the most careful instructions from his employer, who was familiar with the ground he was to go over, and who proved himself a practical business-man in everything that concerned the proposed journey.

Leonard came to the house the next day in the vain hope of seeing Mary Heather or her brother; but he was admitted by Kasper Craig, who accompanied him to the door at the end of his visit. He found some pretence each day to make a pilgrimage to Hammersmith, but the fair girl and the little cripple were never to be seen. Leonard sometimes asked himself if the two children had any existence outside of his dreams. That wonderful morning among the flowers, when the maiden for whom he had waited all his life suddenly appeared before him, to be lost a moment after in the crowd—was she real, or a vision betwixt sleeping and waking? There remained, however, the reality of Kasper Craig, who seemed to have forgotten his odd theories, and talked of his flowers as any other enthusiastic collector of rare and choice plants might have done.

One day Leonard plucked up courage to ask to see the young girl, but he was told shortly that she was too busy to receive visits from young men. Leonard resorted to every device to postpone his departure; but the morning of his last day came and he had not caught another glimpse of Mary Heather.

"I will not leave London without seeing her," he said to himself. "I will tell the old man so, plainly; and if he will not give me the opportunity, he may send some one else in my berth, to-morrow."

He arrived at the cottage earlier than was his wont, and ere he had time to knock, the door was noiselessly opened by Edward Heather, who beckoned him to enter quietly. The child carefully closed the door, and then seizing Leonard by the hand, dragged him up the stairs with

an incredible force. The door of Mary's room stood slightly ajar, and without giving any warning, the child drew the visitor in and closed the door. Mary was seated at her easel, her back towards them. She did not look up from her work, and Leonard saw that she was unconscious of his presence.

"Look at her!" whispered the child. "She is dying, dying! The flower is killing her!"

Leonard followed the direction of the child's eyes. They were fixed upon the orchid. The flower was strangely altered. Instead of drooping gracefully against the branch, it was now a robust and vigorous plant, standing boldly forth from the bark on which it had bloomed. The faint, rosy tinge had deepened and spread over the whole flower. The mouth was scarlet, and the throat with its cruel spikes was spotted here and there with flecks of dark red.

It was a sinister-looking plant, indeed, and one that might easily terrify a nervous, imaginative invalid like Edward Heather.

"What made it grow like that?" murmured the child. "Does it get all that blood from that dead branch?"

Here Mary Heather looked up from her work, and for the first time Leonard saw her face. It was white as marble. As she rose to greet him, the young man saw that she was wasted to a shadow of her former self.

"What ails you, Mary Heather? Are you ill?" he asked, taking her thin hand in his.

"Ill? No! Only a little tired." Her voice was like an echo of herself, her wan smile a piteous thing to see.

It seemed to Leonard Ebury that his reason deserted him at that moment, and for the life of him he could not have told why he did the thing — but before Mary Heather's pale lips breathed another breath of the heavy air of that chamber, he had torn the flower from the wall and trampled it into a bleeding mass beneath his feet.

"Are you mad?" cried a voice beside him. Kasper Craig had gripped him by the arm, and stood glaring down upon him with a look of rage upon his face which Leonard Ebury never forgot.

"I don't know; we are all mad here, I think," he said, shaking the old man from him. Kasper Craig dropped on his knees and gathered up the mangled flower; the oozing juice stained his hands a dull red; a peculiar, sickly odor pervaded the room. Leonard Ebury threw open the window and let the light summer breeze blow through the chamber. This action seemed to remind the old man of his presence, which in his despair over his shattered treasure he had ignored.

"Ruined!" he cried, staggering to his feet. "Ruined — and by the man I have befriended. Ingrate, fool! Is it thus you requite my confidence, my generosity? You shall pay dearly for this!"

Leonard was speechless and confused. Now that all was over, he was half-ashamed of having yielded to that strange impulse of destruction. He stood with crossed arms leaning against the wall, his eyes fixed upon the floor, trying to regain his self-possession. Kasper Craig came slowly toward him, his hands hidden under his long cloak.

"Have a care, Leonard," cried Mary Heather. The girl's warning came none too soon, for at that moment the old man sprang at Leonard's throat, the long, sharp pruning-knife which he always wore at his belt clutched in his hand.

"A life for a life!" he cried furiously. But before he had time to deal the blow which he had aimed, the younger man closed with him and, after a short struggle, wrested the knife from him and tossed it out of the open window into the garden below. Disarmed and exhausted, the old man sank panting and trembling into a seat. There was a long silence, broken at length by Ebury:

"I don't know what this all means. You have bewitched us all, it seems. You must find another to do your bidding in South America, Kasper Craig. I have other work to do. Mary Heather, I do not know what power this dark old man has over you and your brother, but it is one from which I would fain free you both. Will you come with me out into the world? I have nothing to offer you but my love, my honest name, and the service of my life. Will you come with me?"

Mary had revived a little in the last few moments, and the voice in which she answered the young man's appeal was like her own again.

"Yes, Leonard Ebury, we will go with you."

The child was running about the room, collecting their few possessions.

"Leave all behind, Edward. There is nothing that is ours, here," she said.

Kasper Craig had listened, speechless and ireful, to what was said.

"What nonsense is this, girl?" he at length exclaimed. "You to leave your home and the only friend you have in the world, at the bidding of this penniless adventurer!"

"He gives us love, which suffices for all things. You have never loved us, Kasper Craig, and we owe you nothing. We have worked for you all the years that we have eaten your bread, and we leave you as poor as we came to you."

"Come, Mary, come," said the child, impatiently pulling his sister's skirts. "Come out into the sunshine."

"Remember that you can never come back, Mary; the door will be closed against you forever. My fortune, which would have been yours" — he stopped and hesitated.

"Your fortune!" laughed Edward. "When you were killing her,

what good would that do her? Come away, Mary. We must go now, or stay forever."

"Farewell, Kasper Craig," said the girl. "I am going out of the gray world in which you have kept me, out into the warm sunlight. Farewell!"

Leonard Ebury drew her white hand through his arm, and with the child upon his shoulder, they left the house. When they were out in the street the girl drew a long breath.

"How good it is to be away from that sombre house," she said. "You were sent by Heaven to deliver us from our joyless life with that strange old man."

"Murderer, murderer!" cried the child, shaking his tiny fist at the dingy house.

"Do not mind him," murmured Mary Heather. "He is often strange, like this. Kasper Craig meant no harm to us, I am sure. I never saw him in anger until this afternoon." She touched her lover's arm with a shudder at the danger in which he had been from the old man's knife. "But let us forget him," she continued. "Edward, Leonard, let us agree never to mention his name again."

"With all my heart," cried Leonard; "for I cannot even think of him without doubting my own sanity."

"She does not know," whispered the child in Leonard's ear, "she never did know; but you and I know that the flower was a" —

"Hush, boy," interrupted Leonard Ebury, sternly. "Let Kasper Craig be forgotten, as Mary wills."

"Yes," laughed the child. "We will never see him, we will never think of him again. He cannot hurt us now, for the flower is dead!"

AN EXPERIMENT WITH TIME.

By John Heard, Jr.

SOME ingenious philosopher has said that fiction should be free from the conventions of time and place. If this be true, why do writers invariably choose the past or present for their theme — so rarely, if ever, the future? Instead of waiting for answers that are not forthcoming, let us make our experiment. Let us substitute the future for the past, and see whether the story of what probably *never will be*, sounds much less verisimilar than the story of what probably *never was*.

It will be in March, A. D. 2101. In a large hall overlooking the sea, the sole surviving representative of the great Smith family will be sitting dejectedly by the open window, after a serious consultation with his physicians. They will have informed him that his constitution is unable to stand the rapidity with which he prefers to live: that he is physically in such a condition that he may learn the great solution at any time, at the furthest within three years; and this, even should he take the very greatest precautions — a course which he instinctively disapproves. And he will naturally be engaged in seeking some more congenial mode of prolonging his life.

In those future days science will have made vast progress, and the means at this young man's disposal will be so varied, so wonderful, you might almost say that the famous *Peau de Chagrin* is to be bought at the corner grocery. It will have become possible to dispense with all but skilled labor; the wail of the housekeeper will no longer be heard in the land, for there will be no servants. Writing will have fallen into disuse, except for the traditional custom of signing checks; even speaking will be resorted to only as a mark of courtesy, for thought-transference will be taught in the primary schools. By means of post-hypnotic suggestions, our most secret correspondence will be carried on by unconscious secretaries. The development of strata of personality will be so far under control that if John is having a bad time, he will merely have to hypnotize himself to become Jack or Johnnie. There may even be more than three such strata accessible to the highly educated. Self-cure will be a common practise, and if *I, number one*, suffers from dyspepsia and prefers not to eat, he can call up *I, number two*, to

attend to meals, or upon *I, number three*, to do the sleeping, should indigestion affect him with insomnia.

Notwithstanding the vast fund of resource from which to draw, Mr. Smith will be puzzled for several hours — in fact, until he has summed up the problem about thus: Let A stand for me, and B stand for three years of life. Then, according to physicians, $A - B = 0$; a result which I am loath to admit. Unfortunately, the constant A is not to be changed; therefore we must make B a variable. But how?

Mr. Smith is a blasé young man whom nothing can astonish or dismay. So he will grapple with this problem that most people would consider insoluble, and eventually cry out: *εὐρηκα!* By applying to his forehead the tel-ideograph bulb that hangs within reach of his hand, he will summon Dr. Botchit and the famous engineer Jones; and immediately the astral *ego* of these gentlemen will materialize in the room.

“Doctor,” Mr. Smith will say, after introducing them, “you began to tell me this morning of the properties of the new hydro-carbon *catalepsine*. Will you kindly repeat before Mr. Jones what you said, and answer any questions he may wish to ask?”

“Why, certainly,” the genial doctor will reply. “It will take but a minute. Shall I speak, or merely impress?”

“Oh, speak by all means,” Mr. Jones will say. “I am a poor percipient.”

The doctor will smile condescendingly and begin: “Catalepsine was discovered some six months ago by the illustrious Vossile and his assistant, Mommé. It is called a fluid chiefly because it is an influence that can be superdermically projected in waves of varying intensity. Its properties are usually suspensive, not cumulative or assimilative. The standard dilution is calculated on one-minute wave-effect; for instance: a ten-wave projection will produce suspension of life — which in the past has often been mistaken for death — for ten minutes; and the patient can so accustom his system to the absorption of these waves that, after a short period of training, he might absorb a year-effect without danger. As long as the influence lasts, he is practically dead, and, at the same time, embalmed. The result is unfailing; and I am confident that, judiciously applied, ten or even twenty year-effects would be perfectly successful. Allow me to illustrate my meaning by a practical test on you, Mr. Jones. It is now exactly 7° 44' 21''; when the second-hand reaches the 60, I shall give you a simple, two-minute effect. Settle yourself comfortably; now get ready — 58 — 59 — 60. There! See how he succumbs at once. Well, sir; what time is it now?”

“Half a second over time,” Mr. Jones will answer immediately, on regaining possession of that part of his personality which was in the room at the time. “Indeed, this is marvellous. I have no conscious-

ness of any time having elapsed since you spoke — but your dose was not perfectly exact. Is it really reliable? ”

“ Oh dear, yes, sir,” the doctor will answer cheerfully. “ We never make any mistakes in our profession, now that it is legally recognized that medicine is an exact science. The chronograph must be wrong. Will that do, Mr. Smith? I am rather busy to-night.”

“ Thank you, doctor, yes ; good-evening. The transportation-button is the seventh on the left. Good-night, again.”

As soon as the doctor has vanished, Mr. Jones will turn to his host with a puzzled expression of countenance and begin to say : “ Now would you ” — but Mr. Smith will wave his hand to enjoin patience, and the following dialogue will ensue :

“ I believe, Mr. Jones, that you are reputed the ablest constructive engineer of the time, and I have summoned you to submit the feasibility of a new and extensive project to your criticism. You will understand directly why I requested the doctor to explain the properties of cataleptine in your presence. Pray make yourself quite at home. The first button on your chair-arm gives the sensation of smoking ; and what will you have to drink? For the gin-and-soda effect, pull the seventh strap on your right. Very good. Now allow me to ask you a few questions.

“ Let us begin with *Sound*. Never mind *what* it is ; we know that it travels about 1,100 feet per second — that is correct, is it not? Well, then, suppose that we could transport ourselves at the rate of say 5,000 feet per second from some point, where we were engaged in conversation, to another point one hundred miles distant. At the end of seven minutes, or thereabouts, we should hear our own conversation over again — just as a cannon-ball or a thunderbolt unquestionably hears the noise it makes both at the beginning and at the end of its journey. It is amusing to think that, at a certain rate of travel, we should be condemned to hear the same words over and over forever — which would, perhaps, teach us the advantages of silence. But never mind such trivialities. Is my line of argument correct? ”

“ Yes — and no! ”

“ Very good ; for convenience sake, I accept the *yes* and reject the *no*.

“ Let us pass on to *Light*. Its rate of travel is approximately 193,000 miles per second. Now suppose that we could transport ourselves absolutely instantaneously from this room where we are sitting to the sun, or some equally distant point. At the end of eight minutes, we should be able to see ourselves sitting here exactly as we were before we started. Of course, you and I could not, simply because our eyes and ears are not gauged for such distances, and no sound we could produce could reach so far. But the abstract fact — if one may use such a term — remains. Under certain imaginable conditions the sound *might* be

heard, the view *might* be seen. I mean that in the realms of light and sound, these impressions I describe would be perceptible by sufficiently delicate instruments. Is that true?"

"Perhaps — but" —

"Very good! These are merely examples; now let us come down to closer work. Tell me — but won't you pull that strap again? — tell me, what is *Time*?"

"Time?"

"Yes, time. You hesitate — then let me make it easier for you by taking a fraction of time. What is a day?"

"Why — a day is twenty-four hours — more or less — isn't it?"

"No, sir! That is just where I wished to lead you. A day is a revolution of the earth about its axis. Will you accept the definition? You cannot imagine a day on which the earth does not revolve about its axis."

"Well — if it pleases you. I don't see that it makes much difference. I admit it for the time being. Go on!"

"If you admit that, we shall proceed smoothly. You have admitted that 'day' and 'revolution of the earth' are interchangeable terms — in other words, that one hour is one twenty-fourth of a revolution. Now give me your attention.

"My doctors tell me I have only three years to live. My body is condemned; they can do nothing for it, nor can I. Neither money, nor love, nor human ingenuity can change that; so that I accept the fact and relinquish all hope in that direction. But let us see what we can do with the other member of the equation — the three years. Can I lengthen them? In other words, can I remove my body from the influence of time?"

"You say no, of course; it is a preposterous proposition — a repetition of the old exploded notion of the elixir of life, or youth, or beauty. If you ever thought about the problem, you no doubt dismissed it at once as unworthy of serious consideration. But stay! Were you ever in my position? Anything that human ingenuity can devise and human labor can accomplish, is within my reach — I mean as far as the cost of the thing is concerned. I have only three years in which to make my attempt, and train for my fight against death. But that is ample — for I have my plan, and I believe you are the man to execute it. You will, of course, have to abandon everything else at once, and I shall expect you to devote night and day to the work. Name your own price, but give me your whole time. Are you willing?"

"Before I commit myself, I must hear your plan; that is fair?"

"Certainly. Here it is. The electrical current requires, I believe, about eight minutes to travel around the world. Never mind about the exact

time—for the sake of convenience, let us call it an hour. Now, suppose that I were carried along by that current and completed the circuit in one hour. According to methods in practice, if I have been going westward, I shall have gained twenty-four hours and lost one, leaving me a net balance of twenty-three hours to the good. This means that if I leave here at ten on Tuesday morning, I get back at eleven on Monday. If, again, instead of stopping off I continue to circle the earth for seven hours, at the end of that time I shall have gained six days and seventeen hours; in other words, I am back at my point of departure at five o'clock on Tuesday *of the week before I started on my journey*. Do I make myself clear? Does that sound logical?"

"It does have a pseudo-logical jingle, I must confess!"

"Doesn't it? Well, let us continue. It would be folly, manifestly, to suppose that the rest of the world could in any way be affected by my individual movements; so the only satisfactory explanation of this apparent difference of time is that I have changed. And as I have a week to account for, there is no other way of doing so except by supposing that I have grown a week younger. You cannot well deny that—there are the figures. No, don't interrupt me yet. Let us first see what courses are open to me, and treat me as a mathematical quantity.

"Suppose that I travel for one hour and stop off a younger man by nearly a whole day. Then I can live for twenty-three hours just as usual, and at the end of that time be not a minute older than when I started. But the drawback to the arrangement is that I should be living the self-same day over and over again. So it would be preferable to continue travelling—say for a twelve-month; at the end of which I shall have reached a day sixteen years previous to my birth. By degrees I should work backward to the days of Napoleon, to the Revolution, to the Middle Ages, to Charlemagne, to the time of Christ, to the founding of Rome, to the reign of Pharaoh! I could take up the history of the Old Testament page by page, until I came upon Adam and Eve and the serpent in the garden of Eden. After leaving them, I could whirl through the geological ages, through the nebular hypothesis, until I finally reach the Beginning of all things and am face to face with my God! Think of it, sir; think of it!"

"My excellent sir—my good friend!" Mr. Jones will say, more impressed by the fantastic grandeur of this retrospect than he is willing to show. "Let me in turn ask you a few questions. You propose to go back with the past as though that past still existed. But where is yesterday?"

"Can't you remember yesterday? Does it not live, even in your imperfect memory? Do not the things you did yesterday influence you in your doings to-day? Is not that a proof that yesterday still exists?"

Believe me, Mr. Jones, yesterday has not ceased to exist in *your* life, it has not ceased to exist in the life of the universe. Yesterday — the past — lives on *absolutely*. It is we who have passed out of it. Could we go back and become again what we were, we should find all else exactly as it was. Events have an immortal entity of their own. What is once written, cannot be effaced. What is done, cannot be undone; it is eternal. It is the same with the future; it exists now; it has existed from the Beginning, but we have not yet reached it. If you could project yourself into to-morrow, you would see all that will happen to-morrow; you would live it exactly as you are fated to do, only you will be one day ahead. Is that clear to you?"

"There is method in this madness, certainly; and you bewilder me. But let us stop here, just one moment. Suppose that, instead of traveling westward as you propose, you started eastward at ten as before. You would return one hour later. And what would you have achieved? You would simply have been around the world in sixty minutes, and everything that you left behind — even you yourself — would be only sixty minutes older."

"No, my friend! there you are distinctly wrong. You have not quite grasped the principle of this discovery. Like all great discoveries, it is too simple to be believed at once. Yet the pre-existence and the post-existence of what we call the present, is as absolutely proved to me as the undeniable fact — undeniable because you are accustomed to the idea — that, just as there was a yesterday which you remember and was once *to-day*, there is a to-morrow that will in its turn become *to-day*.

"When I return from my circuit westward, the others who have been stationary are only one hour older; but you are a whole revolution, and one hour more, older than when you left. Cannot you grasp that? You might object that, as I have only three years of life left in which to travel, I should never have time to carry out my programme and reach the Beginning of all things. But there you would be wrong again. What is it that really — finally — makes us mortal? Age! And what is age? The effect of elapsed *time*. Time, you see, sir; always time! Now, don't you understand that as soon as you cease to be subject to the laws of time, you put aside mortality — you elude death? Having withdrawn myself from the realm in which the law of time is in force, I should remain untouched by age. Reflect a little while, and you will see this is but a logical development of the possibilities already revealed to us by hypnotism. At any rate, this fact remains absolute. If I go westward, I grow younger, according to our relative phraseology. If I go eastward, I grow older. In the first case I go back to former incarnations; in the second, I anticipate my future *avatars*."

"But you are married, sir; what would be the effect of this manipulation of time upon your family relations?"

"Quite right. I had thought of that and recognized the inevitable complications that will arise. Some of these are indeed puzzling. For instance, suppose I journey eastward for a year or so. At the end of that time I should find Mrs. Smith a woman of fifty. If I prolonged my journey sufficiently, my own son, now a babe in arms, would be my own great-grandfather. On the other hand, if I go westward, at the end of one year I might happen to be present at my wife's birth—at least so this would seem to me; for, in reality, they would be quietly living in the present, a little older than when I left them. Now all this is not at all conventional. At my age I don't want a wife of fifty, nor a baby. And if you look at it from her point of view, I have practically disappeared from life and she has become a widow. But it is possible that, after looking at the past, I may not like it. I may wish to reverse the current, and come back to the present again. The minute I reappear, she of course resumes her position as my wife; and if in the meantime she had married again, it would be very awkward for us both—I should say, for all three of us. Of course, this is not likely, but it might happen; and we should provide for all contingencies. There is still another view to take: as soon as I cease to be mortal, I am no longer a man; and the validity of our marriage might be questioned. Those mythological relations between demi-gods and women were neither very happy nor very regular. So I have decided—more for her sake than for my own—upon a divorce, as the only satisfactory way out of the situation. Imagine her feelings on learning that she is married to a contemporary of the Adam or the Omegam of the human species!

"That answers your question. Now let us return to our project. Do you feel competent to build me an electro-duct around the world, and to supply it with a current of sufficient strength to propel a box weighing 250 pounds at the rate of 25,000 miles an hour? I furnish the money and arrange for the right-of-way. Can you do it?"

"Certainly!"

"Very well, then! I consider the problem solved. Between my start and my arrival at the Beginning—which is also probably the End—I shall wish to make about a hundred stops. I shall look up my history and make out a list; then, as soon as you can figure out your rate of speed exactly, Dr. Botchit can put up in compressed form the proper catalepsine wave-effects which I should need. There will be plenty of time to figure out all these details while the road is being built. And the *modus operandi* is very simple. After taking my first catalepsine-effect, I am placed in the car, or box, in such a way that the second I awake and move my hand, the current is automatically switched

off. But never mind about such details to-day. The whole plan is marvellously simple. I take an effect, stop off a hundred years ago — stay as long as I like — take another effect and proceed — and so on. Now do you think you can do it?”

“Yes!” — “Will you do it?” — “On one condition.” — “Which is?”

“That the line should be double-tracked. Because, my dear sir, your project is either a sublime discovery, or a stupendous folly. *A priori*, I hesitate to say which; for *les extrêmes se touchent*. But the men of the present will surely account it the former. You would be the only one able to undeceive them, and you might be a hundred or a thousand years away. The blame, the ridicule, would rest upon me; and I could not bear either — or being locked up in an insane-asylum. Therefore, I prefer to do as you do. At worst, it is an original and amiable mode of suicide. At best, the experience is worth trying for. But you shall go west, and I east. You go into the past, I into the future. You go back to the Beginning, and I go forward to the End; and there we shall meet, as you say, face to face with God. It is very fine!”

After a pause Mr. Jones will sigh, and answer Mr. Smith’s evident question as to the reason.

“I am thinking, sir, that it is a great pity we cannot reach the North Pole. It would save a vast deal of time and money. I could erect a platform to make three thousand revolutions, or days, a minute, and in a quarter of an hour spin you backwards more than a hundred years along the thread of time. Why, if you started at seven in the morning, you could pass Charlemagne at nine, lunch with Cleopatra about noon, and call on Moses for supper. And while you are a guest in his tent, we could reverse the engine, put on full steam, and whirl me forward into Kingdom Come in less than a week! But we cannot have everything our own way. Let us go to bed and make a fresh start in the morning. If we are not lunatics, if we succeed, we are worthy to appear before God as the most wonderful of his creations.”

And here the interview will end. But the plan will be a perfect success. The world will be circled by the copper-aluminium electro-duct, and in his journey backward through time, Mr. Smith will reach this day of the present month and meet me, this afternoon, on the Common. Not having my watch with me, I shall quite innocently ask him what time it may be; and he will laugh as he answers:

“For me there is no such thing as time. I have suppressed it. And if you will accompany me to the end of the board-walk, I will explain how it is done.”

And this is the manner in which I shall come to know these things.

SOMETHING MORE THAN FANTASY.

By Julia Schayer.

It was an ugly night to be standing on a street-corner waiting for an omnibus; and as a gust of wind came tearing along flinging minute icelances into his face and neck, Tom Thorpe shrank into his fur collar, and hurling a particularly lurid imprecation in the direction of the expected vehicle, looked about him for shelter.

The dimly-lighted vestibule of a tall brick building offering the nearest refuge, he stepped within, and as he stamped his icy feet upon the dirty floor, cast a glance over the array of cards and signs which decorated the dingy walls.

Suddenly he uttered an exclamation, and stood like one petrified with astonishment. Then, reading aloud, he muttered:

“‘Thomas à Kempis Willis, Artist. Room 8. Fifth floor.’ Can it be? Yes, it must be! But why, in the name of all that is sacred” —

He turned and surveyed the long flights of stairs that vanished into gloomy perspective; then, with a shrug, repeated:

“Fifth floor! And no elevator! Some other day — to-morrow” —

He stopped, wavered, and just as the 'bus became visible through the snow-wreaths, his feet were on the stairs. It was a hard pull for a man of Thorpe's avoirdupois, and by the time he had reached the fifth floor he was obliged to stop to get his breath before knocking at the door of room 8. This trouble was spared him, however, for the door opened, and the man he was seeking stood before him, smiling eagerly, but with no trace of surprise on his face.

It was a haggard face, lit up by singularly brilliant dark eyes, and framed in a halo of curling, reddish hair. A black fez surmounted the ruddy mass, and the tall, emaciated form was wrapped in a seedy gown of oriental stuff.

“Tom, dear old fellow!” cried the artist as their hands met in a warm pressure, “I am so glad to see you! I have been looking for you all day!”

Thorpe stared. Willis smiled, significantly; a light color flew into his cheek.

“Oh!” exclaimed Thorpe presently, as if recalling something. “Oh,

I understand. The invisibles told you I was coming, eh? Still riding that hobby, Kemp?"

He laughed indulgently, laying his arm affectionately about the other's shoulders. Willis made no response, but led the way across the big, cheerless room to that portion where a few odds and ends of furniture and artistic impedimenta were grouped, the most conspicuous object being a large canvas supported upon an easel, and draped with a faded crimson rag. A tarnished synagogue-lamp faintly illumined the scene, and a most inadequate fire smouldered in a rusty stove.

Motioning Thorpe to a chair, after some further exchange of friendly greetings, Willis fell into a reverie, his eyes fixed upon the floor. Their wonderful brilliancy obscured, the pallor of his face was all the more striking. It was a fine, sensitive face, weak perhaps, yet weak only as the face of a good woman or of an innocent child is weak; the face, in short, of a man in whom the spiritual has triumphed over the lower nature, to use an old metaphor. The soul shone through the flesh as flame through an alabaster lamp. As Thorpe looked upon it and the evidences of failure and poverty all about him, his old feeling of tenderness for the man before him awoke afresh.

They had been boys together in their native New England village, and though their families were as widely sundered by differences of creed and positions as could well be, the two boys formed for each other a friendship that no amount of parental interference could affect.

Thorpe's father had been an Orthodox divine of the cast-iron type; and his son's determined intimacy with the son of Willis — a social pariah, whose varied religious experiences had landed him finally in the Slough of Infidelity and Spiritualism — was a grievous trial to the reverend doctor. Yet neither commands nor whippings prevailed.

Kemp Willis, clever, spirited, amiable, frail in body and girlishly pure in soul, yet ever ready for fun and adventure, exercised a sort of fascination over sturdy Tom, which time and separation had interrupted, but never destroyed.

The fitful correspondence maintained during some years (Tom having run away to sea, as the prelude to an ultimately respectable business career) had finally ceased, but neither had forgotten the other. To find his old friend and comrade in the situation now indicated, wrung Thorpe's soul with pain. He felt his own full-blooded physical soundness and worldly prosperity as a reproach, and was all the more miserable as he reflected that Willis would undoubtedly reject all proffers of assistance. Rousing himself from these reflections, which had occupied only a small portion of the time required to describe them, he spoke, his big, sonorous voice gentle as it always was when speaking to the weak or suffering.

"Kemp," he said, reproachfully, "how long have you been in New York?"

Willis looked up with a dazed air. Thorpe repeated his question.

"Rather more than a year," Willis answered.

"And you never let me know! Kemp, was that fair? Was that true to our old bond?"

Willis evaded his friend's look, flushing painfully.

"I had a reason," he said. "I was wrapped up in — *this*," pointing to the canvas on the easel, over which was thrown a faded drapery. "I have thought of nothing else, Tom, but just this, for months."

"And these others?" said Thorpe, glancing at the rows of stretchers that formed a sort of dado about the room.

"Unfinished — all of them!" responded Willis, with a despondent look. Then, with childish animation: "The trouble with me, Tom, is too many ideas! Of course," seeing Thorpe's faint smile, "that sounds utterly imbecile, but it is literally true. A subject for a picture comes to me. It possesses me. I am on fire. I paint like mad for a day, or a week, perhaps. The idea begins to take form. I see my picture, in imagination, finished, famous! Then suddenly, pell-mell comes another idea, even more glorious than the last. I close my eyes, ears, mind, soul against it! I fight, I struggle, I implore! I curse it! It will not be denied. The first goes to the wall, I plunge into the next. Look here, and here," he went on excitedly, rising and turning about one after another of the stretchers, exposing what seemed to Thorpe strange, yet beautiful sketches. "Any one of these might have made me a famous man, if only" — He stopped abruptly, gazed for a moment upon these unfinished dreams, then resumed his seat.

Thorpe did not smile again. He had faith in Willis's genius; and what might have sounded like the most ridiculous bombast from another seemed merely artistic enthusiasm in him. He simply gave his mind to the solution of the knotty problem of relieving Willis's evident need without incurring a rebuff. Finally, inspired, as he believed, with a happy thought, he said, pointing to one of the sketches which was rather more advanced than the others:

"I think if you were to finish up *that* picture — it wouldn't take long, would it? — that I know of some one — a friend of mine — who would buy it at your own price. What do you say? Eh?"

Willis gave his friend a whimsical glance under which Thorpe colored guiltily, and shook his head slowly.

"You are very good, dear old Tom, but it is impossible. My whole soul is full of this," again indicating the covered canvas.

He came and sat by Thorpe's side, and they fell into a long and confidential talk. Aside from his bodily weakness, Thorpe found Willis

singularly unchanged. He was as ever, lovable, responsive, full of the odd quips and bright sallies that had made him always so delightful a companion; yet to his great dissatisfaction he discovered that the artist's early predilections for the occult, his belief in so-called spiritualistic phenomena, had grown with his growth; "strengthened with his weakness," as Thorpe caustically put it to himself. Several times during the present conversation, Willis touched upon this topic, but each time, seeing the look of uncompromising if indulgent contempt upon Thorpe's face, his eager, wistful gaze fell, and for some moments he would be lost in profound thought.

Thorpe left the studio a good deal depressed, and the substantial comfort of his bachelor apartment failed to console him. When he saw him in Paris, Willis seemed on the road to fortune. He had had several pictures at the *Salon*, and had received honorable mention.

"It must be that infernal set of Theosophical imbeciles and lunatics that have ruined him!" he fumed. "Poor old chap! He always did have a bee in his bonnet!"

In a day or two Thorpe went again to the studio. Willis was painting, and beyond a smile and nod did not allow his visitor to distract his attention.

Thorpe seated himself where he could see the painting, and found his interest at once aroused to an extraordinary degree. The canvas was a large one; the scene represented was of a Bacchanalian character. Around a table sumptuously set out with golden dishes and crystal flagons, heaped with fruits and garlanded with flowers, were grouped a number of handsome, reckless men, and beautiful, half-nude women. In the foreground was the figure of a very young man upon whose face the artist was now at work. The look on this face was something not to be forgotten. The youth seemed to have been arrested in the act of raising to his lips the arm of the woman who leaned upon his shoulder — arrested by some object visible to himself alone, some object whose aspect had frozen the amorous smile upon his lips and whitened his ruddy cheek. His eyes, startled, longing, desperate, were fixed upon a portion of the canvas where at present only a faintly-defined figure, whether that of man or woman was uncertain, was visible as through a sort of luminous mist. The eyes of all the other painted forms were fixed in wonder and consternation upon the youth. Thorpe was no *connoisseur*, but the intense realism of the scene depicted — its splendor of color, and dramatic significance — awoke his profoundest admiration.

"You are right, Kemp!" he could not refrain from saying, at length. "It is a grand picture! You will be a famous man yet!"

Willis dropped his brush, and turned toward his friend an exultant face.

"A few days — only a few days — and it will be finished!" he cried.

"Unless," said Thorpe, tactlessly, "it is turned to the wall, to make room for a new idea, like these others."

Willis grew grave, but smiled without offence. "This picture is to be finished!" he said quietly. "They have assured me so."

"They?" Thorpe repeated in puzzled tones. "Oh! I understand! The invisibles, again."

Willis looked at his friend gently, almost compassionately. "Ah, Tom, I am richer than you, after all, in spite of my ragged coat," he said, with a sort of absent smile. "Man lives not by bread alone!"

"He stands a devilish poor chance of living without it!" retorted Thorpe. "And I even dispute that half a loaf is better than no bread at all! Better be quite dead than half alive!"

Willis had taken up his brush and was working again, feverishly, absorbedly. Suddenly Thorpe rose and came and planted himself squarely before the artist, his handsome, *bon vivant* face working.

"See here, Kemp!" he cried out. "There are some things I cannot stand. One is, to see a man starving himself to death in a city overrunning with beef and bread, to say nothing of other good things! Now listen, for God's sake, to reason! We will leave sentiment out of the question, altogether, and start on a strictly business basis. You want to finish that picture. To do so you need physical strength. To acquire that, you need — a hundred things you have not got. Now don't deny it, man! You know it is true as gospel. Now look at the situation like a sensible man. Take the needed loan from me — good Lord, you may give me your note for it if it will be any comfort to you! — build up your strength, finish your work, and repay me when you are rich and famous. There!" trying to laugh and making a dead failure of it. "There is my address. I am at your service any moment of the day or night, for any amount you please, but you won't see me here again until you come to reason. There are limits even to my powers of endurance."

He wrung Willis's hand, and went away. And he kept his word, not going near the studio, though Willis was hardly out of his mind an instant. On the second day he enclosed a check with one line of entreaty. The next mail brought it back to him with two lines for answer.

"The invisibles say 'No!' It must not be. I am happy. God bless you! W."

A night or two later as Thorpe sat, inwardly fuming, before his cheerful fire whose flame filled the cozy room with a pleasant, fitful glow, he became suddenly aware of some presence, and turning his head saw standing between him and the closed door, Kemp Willis in fez and

seedy oriental gown, looking straight at him with his pathetic, whimsical smile. Thorpe started up — the form vanished.

"I must have dozed off," said Thorpe, but he knew positively that he had not. No man was ever freer from superstitious fancies than Tom Thorpe, yet he could not overcome a curious creeping of the flesh, nor a sudden vivid impulse to go to Willis.

Within half an hour, after having dispatched a messenger to a celebrated physician, he entered the studio.

Willis, half-reclining on the old couch, propped up by pillows, was working at his picture. He gave Thorpe a bright smile, and without ceasing his work, said quietly: "I knew you would come! Thank you!"

The instant Thorpe looked upon his friend he knew the truth — the artist's days — nay hours — were numbered! And the picture was still unfinished. Though to Thorpe's eyes the rest of the picture was perfect, Willis was still putting feverish touches here and there upon the faces of the women, the fruit, the flowers, while the indefinite outline sketched upon the misty background remained as when Thorpe had last seen it. As if reading the latter's thoughts, Willis suspended his brush, and looked at him with piteous anxiety.

"I do not understand, Tom," he said, brokenly, between short, panting breaths, "but for some reason I cannot paint that one figure. I see her before me — so divinely beautiful! — yet as I seize my brush she fades from my sight. Strange! Yet it will not always be so!" he went on, with a rapt, introspective look. "She is drawing nearer. To-day she was less elusive and mysterious; to-morrow" —

The brush dropped from the artist's fingers, and he sank back upon the cushions, white as the dead, breathing almost imperceptibly. For a moment Thorpe thought all was over, but as he was about to raise the drooping head, Willis opened his eyes, and smiled.

"Tom," he whispered wearily, "sometimes I think my body is going to play me a dastardly trick, after all. I'm pretty weak, am I not, Tom?"

"I'm afraid you are, dear boy! I had a sort of inkling you might be — ill, and I sent for a doctor. He ought to be here presently. You don't mind? And I brought this along" — he added, producing a silver flask, and pouring a few amber drops into the tiny cup that was a part of it — "Here, take this." To Thorpe's surprise, Willis put aside the draught.

"Don't be angry, Tom! It would not help me, if it is to be; and I — I — think it *is* to be, and soon. Tom, tell me, did you see me in your room an hour or two ago?"

"I fell into a doze and dreamed that I saw you," Thorpe answered, uneasily.

Willis smiled. "It is true, then!" he whispered. "And if that, why not all?"

Thorpe could no longer repress his emotion. He knelt by the dying man's side, pressing the cold hands in his.

"Oh, Kemp!" he said brokenly. "Why have you so wronged yourself and me? Why have you hidden yourself from me in this cruel wilderness of a city, all these months, poor and suffering, leaving me, your old, true friend, to discover you by mere accident?"

Willis laid his hand affectionately on his friend's heaving shoulder. "Accident? It was not accident, Tom. There is no such thing as accident, in the sense you mean." Then, after a moment's hesitation, he said: "Tom, I am going to ask of you a favor, a great favor, and one that will be all the harder to grant, because I know it will seem to you strange and foolish, and because I cannot possibly explain why I ask it."

"Go on!" urged Thorpe, as the other paused.

"Well, then. If, as seems to me possible, I should pass out of this body before my picture is finished, will you promise that when all is over, you will stay here in the studio, alone, for three or four nights — entirely alone?"

Thorpe looked sharply at Willis. Was his mind wandering? No. There was no delirium in that serene, white face.

"You will do this, Tom?"

"Do it? Of course I will do it. It is nothing — absolutely nothing. Ask me something *now*. Surely there are things I might be doing *now*!"

"I have asked an immense, a colossal favor," said Willis, with strange solemnity. "No man ever asked a greater."

At this moment there was a sharp knock at the door, and the doctor entered. His visit was brief. His face, that discreet physician's mask that betrays nothing, was bent a few moments over the patient. A few questions, a moment's thought, a prescription dashed off, and the doctor was gone. Thorpe followed him to the pavement.

"He will live through the night — perhaps," he answered Thorpe's questioning eyes. "Inanition — wasting — the sword has worn out the scabbard." The door of the coupé shut sharply — the physician was gone. Thorpe had the prescription filled, and then returning to the studio, took up his watch.

For some hours Willis lay quite motionless, his faint breathing the only sound in the great shadow-haunted room. Towards midnight he grew restless, and began babbling of the old days, when he and Thorpe had roamed the woods and fields together; scenes and names long unvisited and unspoken, came into his mind and found utterance through the unconscious lips. To this succeeded a long stupor, so like death

that Thorpe was more than once sure that life was extinct. But as the night waned, the dying man suddenly started up, opened his eyes, and gazed before him with a wondering, joyous look as of one who sees a vision. Involuntarily, Thorpe's eyes turned in the same direction — he saw only the bare, blank wall upon which the swaying lamp cast distorted shadows; the small, uncurtained window through which the paling stars looked in upon the scene.

A wonderful radiance came into the face of the dying; he stretched forth his arms with a joyous cry. "Beautiful! Sublime!" he murmured. "There is no death! There is no death!"

The light suddenly vanished from his face, he sank back, smiled glowingly once more upon his friend, and was still.

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Willis was followed to the grave by Thorpe and three or four artists who, with the ready sympathy of the fraternity, came forward to show the last mark of respect to a man of whom they knew almost nothing.

Before the arrival of the undertaker, they had wandered about the studio, examining and commenting upon the unfinished sketches with an unembarrassed freedom that was not at all agreeable to Thorpe's feelings. On one point all agreed — the dead artist had possessed remarkable powers, but had been unfortunate in his choice of subjects. The world cared nothing now for the weird and mystical.

"He must have been a mere visionary," said one. "His head always among the stars."

"Not a bad place to have it," returned another.

"Here!" said an old fellow, with a beard like foam, who had drawn the drapery away from the canvas on the easel. "You young fellows, look here! These women are real. You can see the roses rise and fall on their naked bosoms. There is nothing mystical about that dimple in that girl's wrist, eh? And look at that young fellow's face! By Jove! no need to paint anything on that unfinished portion. Each man can fill it out with his own particular phantoms of regret or remorse!"

A murmur of admiration passed from lip to lip.

"A pity — a great pity!" said the old artist, letting the drapery fall over the canvas; and silently all turned away.

A letter was found upon the table in the studio. It was addressed to Thorpe, and had been written a few days before Willis's death. It contained a request that in the event of his passing away — Willis never used the word "death" in this connection — Thorpe should dispose of his effects as he thought best, and it gave the address of a widowed relative living in a remote country town, to whom the money derived from the sale of his unfinished sketches, etc., should be sent. His last work was excepted from these provisions. This painting — after a certain

time had elapsed — was to be placed on exhibition, and sold. Thorpe was to dispose of the sum it brought in any way he chose.

About eleven o'clock of the night succeeding the funeral, Thorpe entered the studio. The janitor, assisted by certain personal belongings sent thither by Thorpe, had done his best to make things comfortable, but the atmosphere of poverty, suffering, and death still hung about the great bare room. Even a less impressionable man than Thorpe might have shrunk from passing night after night alone, within its shadow-haunted walls. But Thorpe was the last man on earth to give way to mere impressions, and having stirred the fire and turned up the lamp, he put on his furred gown and slippers, lit a cigar, and tried to fix his attention upon the evening journals. It proved an abortive effort.

The light was dim and wavering, the room cold, and the wind made gruesome music among the tin roofs and chimney-pots above his head. Finally, he threw aside his paper, and picked up a book that lay upon the table among poor Willis's brushes and color-tubes. It was Sinnett's "Esoteric Buddhism."

Thorpe opened the little volume and began reading passages at random, at first contemptuously, then wonderingly, and finally becoming so absorbed that the discomforts of his situation were quite forgotten. To understand the state of mind into which Thorpe was gradually brought, let any intelligent sceptic, utterly unversed in Buddhistic literature, try the effect of a few chapters of Sinnett's work upon himself.

"Monstrous!" muttered Thorpe, almost resentfully. "Absurd! Is it possible that any human mind seriously entertains such theories!" Then, after another ten minutes:

"Wild! Preposterous! Yet ingenious, very! and — interesting, too! Now suppose, for argument's sake, that there were anything in this — *stuff*, why, poor Kemp, dying as he did with the great desire of his heart unfulfilled, might be, as this book says, still 'chained to earth.' Why, he might be wandering around the scene of his last struggles at this very moment, in some form or other!"

Before extinguishing the lamp, he lifted the drapery and looked a moment at the picture. How life-like the faces, how terrible the eyes of the youth, how weird the faint outlines of the unfinished figure, upon the misty background!

"Poor Kemp!" Thorpe sighed, as he let the drapery fall, and stretching himself upon the couch, tried to sleep. Sleep came not. On the contrary, he was never more awake. Twelve o'clock clanged from a neighboring belfrey. The wind suddenly died away. Intense stillness filled the room. Still, Thorpe slept not. Strange fancies troubled his brain: for the first time in his life he was forced to confess himself ner-

vous; and abused himself accordingly. At last, finding himself each moment wider awake, he resolved to give up all idea of sleep, to rise, light the lamp, and pass the night as best he could in an upright position; but at the instant of rising, the space around the couch seemed suddenly filled with the soft, rushing sound of etherial draperies, a light breeze as of passing wings swept his face, a delicious drowsiness crept through his body, and even as he wondered, he slept.

When he awoke it was day. He lay a moment, only half-realizing where he was, then rising on his elbow looked carelessly about him. The next instant, with a smothered cry, he was on his feet. All the light in the room seemed to have concentrated itself upon the easel. The drapery lay in a heap upon the floor, and — was he dreaming? — there, on the misty background, where the night before only the merest indefinite outline was visible, an exquisite woman's form was now emerging, as it were, into view, its perfect curves veiled in translucent folds, the face still shrouded in mystery. Thunderstruck, Thorpe looked at the table. There, confusion reigned. Brushes were strewn about, the palette covered with fresh paints. In a dazed, uncertain way he put out his hand and touched the canvas — he withdrew it soiled with fresh paint!

He examined the room, the windows, and the fastenings of the door. There was no place in the room where a pigmy, even, could have secreted himself; the windows overlooked the court five stories below, and were fastened by springs; the door was locked and bolted!

At about the same hour on the next evening, with a resolute step and fell expression, Thorpe again entered the studio. He had arrived at a conclusion as satisfying to his reason as it was irritating to his temper. Some of the young artists who occupied rooms in the building and were acquainted with Willis's peculiar beliefs and with his own intentions, which he had felt called upon to explain to the janitor — a garrulous Irishman — had made him the victim of a clever trick. Very well — let them try it again! And having secured the door, he proceeded to put in operation his scheme of self-protection. During the day he had sent thither, carefully packed from prying eyes, a dark lantern of the latest pattern. This he now unpacked, lit, and placed by the side of the couch. His next act was to examine the walls, floor and ceiling of the room, which he carefully sounded, with no other result than an increase of irritation. Nothing annoys your man of reason like finding himself mystified and baffled. There seemed nothing more to be done in the way of preparation but to carefully examine the picture itself. Thorpe found it precisely as he had left it that morning, except of course that the paint was nearly dry. The palette and brushes had been carefully cleaned and neatly arranged, by the janitor, at

Thorpe's request, and everything made as comfortable as possible for the night.

After a half-hour of reading, therefore, Thorpe extinguished the lamp, closed the slide of the lantern, laid his revolver on a convenient chair, and laid himself down upon the couch. As before, he was keenly, painfully wakeful. He had ascertained that he was sole occupant of the fifth floor.

As midnight drew on the silence became oppressive. The slightest sound—the ticking of his watch, even—was exaggerated into something menacing, supernatural. A genuine burglarious attempt would have been welcomed cheerfully. As on the preceding night Thorpe finally resolved to rise and sit out the night in his chair, but all at once he heard again the swift rush of filmy draperies, again the soft breeze swept his cheek and the delicious drowsiness overcame his senses; and with one impotent effort at resistance he sank into unconsciousness.

The clock in the nearest belfry gave out seven sonorous tones as Thorpe woke once more, and rising, turned towards the easel. This time he uttered no ejaculation; his face grew stern and white, for while he had slept, there, on the canvas, a woman's face had unfolded itself like a beautiful flower. Brow, cheeks, chin, mouth, divinely fair and perfect, only the eyes remained still shrouded and invisible.

Like one who doubts his own senses Thorpe arose, and again applied the test of touch, with the same result. His fingers were soiled with fresh paint. He turned a bewildered look about him—among the wild disorders of the table lay the book on "Buddhism." A grim smile distorted his face at sight of it. Certain passages that had struck him as particularly wild and audacious recurred to his memory.

Was *he*, Thorpe, one of those uncanny beings asserted by the author to exist? Were *his* "principles loosely united, and susceptible of being borrowed by other floating principles *who were thus endowed with a transitory material form by whose aid they could act upon material things*,"—a paint-brush, for instance? To continue, then, in the language of Theosophy, had he then "been so entranced that the energies of his fifth principle (whatever that might be!) had been conveyed into the wandering shell" of his unfortunate friend Willis, thus enabling him while in that ephemeral (and highly unsatisfactory) condition to fulfil the passionate last desire of his earthly existence?

Preposterous! And unpleasant, as it was preposterous! With all his being he protested against lending his principles, "fifth" or otherwise, for such purposes. It was too much to ask, even of a friendship like his for Willis!

In a state of mind not to be described, Thorpe dressed himself, be-

stowed a cursory glance about the room, and left the studio, determined not to return. Yet as night fell, a power he could not resist urged him on, and at about the same hour he again entered the garret.

Everything was in order; the lamp shining with unaccustomed brilliancy, the fire radiating an uncommonly cheering glow.

This time Thorpe merely turned the key in the door, and ignoring his dressing-gown and slippers, lit a cigar, and revolver in hand, seated himself squarely before the undraped canvas. If any one desired to borrow his "fifth principle" to-night, it was evident that Thorpe meant to be a party to the transaction. If any one, as he still believed, was making him the victim of subtle arts, he was prepared for him, too. There was to be no pretence of sleep even. Alert and grim, he sat at his post, consuming one cigar after another, until every sound had died away but the hoarse, unceasing breath of the giant-city about him.

He studied the picture carefully, and (in his amateurish way) critically, comparing the charms of the painted sirens, and with an imaginativeness for which he had never given himself credit, constructing the story of the young man's life — his innocent youth, his transgressions, his remorse and agony, as the apparition (that of his mother or sister or lost love) appeared to him in the midst of his ungodly revels; he had just reached this point, when *something* — what was it? — passed between him and the light, and in spite of one swift, tremendous effort to oppose it, a sudden sleep seized all his senses.

Again day dawned, and Thorpe awoke. A pair of ineffable violet eyes looked out from the canvas, yearning with immortal love and entreaty.

And Thorpe knew that his promise was fulfilled. The picture was finished.

Having placed Willis's affairs in competent hands, Thorpe left New York for a long-contemplated tour in the West. When he returned, months later, he learned that Willis's picture had created a profound sensation, and had been sold for a large sum (which Thorpe immediately dispatched to the widowed relative).

The picture-dealer told Thorpe that all sorts of rumors had been afloat concerning the painting and its unknown creator. Did Thorpe know him, and was there any truth in the wild stories told of him?

Thorpe shrugged his shoulders in silence. He would do the same to-day, were you to ask him the same questions.

THE STRANGE STORY OF A HAND.

By Elizabeth W. Champney.

CARYL CARLTON was a young American of wealth who had, nevertheless, taken up the study of art seriously, and who chose to have his studio in the Rue de l'Hirondelle, in the oldest quarter of Paris, a district unfrequented by tourists and especially neglected by Americans. There was something dignified, even pretentious, in the rococo ornamentation of the building in which he established himself that struck him on his first view of its façade. It had a far more elegant look than its neighbors, and a certain air of being accustomed to good society, in spite of the fact that its lower story was used as a restaurant, which Carlton entered more out of curiosity than hunger.

While waiting for his dinner he observed that the room had a painted ceiling, — nymphs and cupids executed, he felt sure, by some pupil of Boucher, from one of the master's designs. An open door gave a glimpse of a spiral stone staircase leading to some mysterious upper chamber. The house fascinated him, and he longed for an opportunity to explore it.

The dinner proved to be excellent. Madame Bonvin, a portly but well-preserved dame in a black-silk dress who received his money at the desk, treated him courteously. It was a pleasant place, patronized by men of scholarly appearance, students of the *École de Médecine* and of the *Beaux-Arts*. Among them he noticed an old acquaintance, a lecturer on surgery at the Faculty.

After this, he formed the habit of dining there regularly; and later, noticing the placard, "*Appartements à Louer*" in an upper north window, he inquired of Madame Bonvin, and was pleased to find a room admirably suited to his purposes for a studio. Accordingly he took possession, discontinued his rambles about the city, and devoted himself seriously to art.

One day little Clochette, Madame Bonvin's niece, a pretty peasant, arrived from the country. Her father, a carter in a blue blouse, halted his pair of white Normandy horses at the door of the old hotel, and Clochette entered, her eyes wide open with surprise at the magnificence about her, her picturesque peasant dress setting off her plump figure,

and all her earthly belongings knotted in the gay cotton handkerchief which she held in a remarkably pretty hand.

"*Sainte Vierge!*" exclaimed Madame Bonvin. "Why have you brought this child to the city?"

"For you to make her future," Madame's brother replied, with a foolish grin.

"Imbecile!" replied Madame Bonvin. "Take her back to the country with you. Paris is no place for her."

"First let me make a sketch of her," Carlton exclaimed, impulsively; and as he was a favorite of Madame's, he had his own way.

The sketch prolonged itself into a series of pictures, for Clochette won the way into her aunt's house, and remained all winter. The spiral staircase led from the restaurant to Madame's chamber, and Madame's chamber adjoined the studio.

A door had at one time communicated between them, but now it was heavily bolted on Madame's side, while the key hung on a little hook beside her *priedieu*. The absence of the key from the lock might have suggested to a suspicious mind that Madame was in the habit of using the key-hole, which was a large one, as an opera-glass through which she regarded with interest the play that was being enacted in the next room.

She observed with approval that, except for an occasional caress such as one might bestow upon an innocent child, "*monsieur l'artiste* was *sage, très sage.*" Her surveillance relaxed, and the posing resolved itself into a series of pleasant *tête-à-têtes*.

Clochette often sang for him the *chansons* of Beranger and *ballades* of Provence. She had a sweet voice, not powerful or cultivated, but with a sympathetic thrill in it which was inexpressibly charming. One day she brought Madame Bonvin's guitar, and surprised Carlton by showing herself a remarkable performer. She had the instinct of the artist. Her family were all guitar players, she told him, — they had come from the Pyrenees, and there was a Spanish strain in the blood.

After that Carlton produced a lace mantilla, and costumed her *à la Espagnole*, with a white rose over the left ear. Then he began a picture which he intended to call "A Souvenir of Seville." But Clochette could not hold the guitar without playing. Her little hand danced over the strings, back and forward like a white butterfly gone mad; gavottes and reels; dreamy waltzes that carried the listener to the chestnut-shaded "Place" beneath the castle and let him see the moon-beams sift through the leaves; gay spinning *boleros* that made one's head whirl with merriment; tender, murmuring accompaniments to love-songs; and, best of all, Carlton's favorite with the plaintive words:

Pourquoi me pressez vous le main,
Si vous n'avez rien à me dire?

Very true it was that Carlton pressed Clochette's hand in a friendly way from time to time, and it was also true that he had nothing in especial to say to her; for he was too practical a man to allow the interest he was beginning to feel in bewitching little Clochette to betray him into any entanglement. He painted steadily on at the Spanish picture, finishing it carefully to the love-lock on the cheek and the curling lashes, — all but the little hand, which could not keep still, and whose skill he delighted in.

"Never mind about the hand, Clochette," he would say; "I can paint that easily from some professional model. I would rather hear you play, even at the cost of not finishing the picture."

As for Clochette, she could have gone on playing for him forever, for her silly little heart was basking in a fool's paradise.

Madame Bonvin's ambition was excited. Perhaps, after all, her brother was not such a fool as he seemed, and Clochette had come to the city to really gain her fortune. Madame waited, but nothing happened. The young people seemed perfectly satisfied with the existing relations. Evidently a strategic movement of some kind was necessary to spur the laggard lover into action.

Madame made the movement boldly; — and Clochette disappeared.

Carlton noticed with annoyance her failure to keep her engagement for a sitting. He descended, and demanded of Madame an explanation of Clochette's absence.

"The child has a fine voice," Madame replied, carelessly, "and I have obtained a place for her at a *café chantant*."

Carlton boiled with indignation. Was Madame insane? Did she not know in what such a life was likely to end? It was an atrocity, a crime. Clochette, with her sweet innocence, in such surroundings! He would himself seek her out and interfere.

Madame's black eyes snapped with triumph, like the closing of a trap. "And when Monsieur has found her, what sort of a career does he propose for her?"

Carlton experienced a violent shock. He was on the point of making an unconditional proposal for the hand of little Clochette, but — he temporized, and the man who hesitates is lost.

"Why not let things go on as they were?" he asked.

"Is the life of a professional model so much superior to that of a singer?" Madame asked, icily.

Carlton turned on his heel angrily. For several days he raged to no purpose. Then he reflected that there were friends of his on the Avenue de l'Imperatrice who would be glad to welcome him, and he plunged into society. The reigning belle in the American colony this season was an acquaintance of Carlton's, and he presently found himself dancing

attendance upon her. But he could not forget Clochette. One afternoon his friend, the young surgeon, called at his studio, and began with the assurance of acquaintanceship to turn over the canvases and comment upon them. He was particularly struck with "A Souvenir of Seville." "If it were finished," he remarked, "I would make you an offer for that picture. I am not a rich man, but you may make your own price; and if it is not too far beyond my possibilities, I must have it."

Carlton named a modest sum. "I am tired of the thing," he said — "glad to get rid of it; and I will paint the hand up and let you have it."

It was easier said than done. Carlton was not clever enough to do it from imagination, and no model exactly suited him. A little later, his friend inquired as to his progress, and Carlton confessed his difficulty. "Few people have handsome hands. I cannot find one that suits me. You see, for a guitar-player," he explained, "you want the supple fingers of the artist, — sensitive, expressive; and yet the wrist and back of the hand should be well formed and shapely. I am afraid I shall never finish the picture."

A few days after this the surgeon inquired at the restaurant for Carlton, and was informed by Madame that the artist had left word that he would not return to the studio that night.

"I have a package for him," said the surgeon. "Will you hand it to him in the morning? and, by the way, may I write a note to leave with it?"

Madame made room for him at her desk.

She was blessed with rather more than the usual amount of curiosity. After the room was empty, she could not forbear examining the package. It proved to be a tin box; and on opening the lid she was startled to discover a human hand, that of a young girl, amputated above the wrist. After that, wild horses could not have dragged Madame from reading the note, which ran as follows:

"DEAR CARLTON: — We had a beautiful subject on the dissecting-table to-day, — beautiful from an artistic as well as from a scientific point of view. I could not help wishing that you could see the hand, thinking it just the thing for your guitar picture. Finally it occurred to me that you might be able to paint it, and so I have sawed the bones above the wrist joint to give you the proper play of the hand. You will find that you can bend it into any position you wish, while it excels a live model in keeping the pose. Finish your picture from this hand and I shall be perfectly satisfied.

"Yours,

EDWARD BRUCE."

Madame knew that the picture referred to was that of little Clochette and she looked at the hand with jealous aversion. Suddenly the hand seemed to grow familiar; "Mère de Dieu" she murmured, regarding it

with a fixed stare of fascination. As she looked, the fingers closed slightly; possibly it was only the contraction of the muscles, but it frightened Madame thoroughly. Crossing herself, she bundled the hand into its box, muttering to herself the hope that it would frighten Carlton as much as it had startled her. She sat at her desk for a long time, thinking.

While she pondered, Carlton entered the hall. She rose and gave him the note and package. It seemed to the artist that there was something uncanny in her face, but then Madame had not been friendly with him since he disappointed her. He wished to propitiate her, and he asked after Clochette.

"Monsieur was right," Madame replied. "The profession of a singer was not good for the child. When last I heard from her she had taken a heavy cold. Her mother died of consumption. Well! there are some things worse than that."

"Bring your niece home," Carlton urged. "It is inhuman to neglect her as you have done; with proper care she may recover."

"From consumption, yes; but it is better to die of that than of a broken heart."

Carlton turned on his heel abruptly, and mounted to his studio. He read his friend's letter before opening the box, and was not shocked as Madame hoped he would be.

He examined the hand dispassionately, with some satisfaction at finding it correctly shaped. He hastily placed a chair on the model stand, Clochette's guitar on the chair, and then laid the hand across the strings, in the proper position for playing.

As he stepped back to regard the effect, its resemblance to Clochette's hand struck him for the first time. The nails were rather long and pointed, and the little finger had a twist, quite like hers. He sprang forward and examined the hand intently. Yes, the finger-tips were calloused as though from guitar playing. But the hand was not as plump as Clochette's, and it had the ghastly whiteness of death, while hers was rosy inclining to brown. He replaced it upon the strings with a sigh of relief. As he did so, he distinctly heard an answering sigh.

He was completely puzzled, but at length decided that the sound had been made by the wind;—and putting it from his mind, worked resolutely until night.

Naturally enough he dreamed of Clochette. The face on the canvas haunted him all night. Sometimes she was posing for him as in the old days—merry and bewitching; sometimes she was dead, or there was a reproachful look in her sad, changed face. He awoke suddenly a little past midnight, with an indefinable feeling that some one was in the room. The moonlight glinted in and the studio was indistinctly

lighted. He could make out the model stand and the chair upon it holding the guitar. He remembered his friend's assurance that the hand which he had sent would keep its place upon the strings ; — but what was that white object flitting back and forth so rapidly across the guitar !

For an instant a feeling of absolute horror possessed him, as, faint and distant there breathed through the room the air of Clochette's favorite song :

Pourquoi me pressez vous le main,
Si vous n'avez rien à me dire ?

He sprang to his feet and lighted the gas.

The music ceased. The room was empty. The hand lay perfectly quiet. There was a strip of yellowed white ribbon tied to the guitar, which the wind might have fluttered across the strings, and which might have been the moving object which he had indistinctly seen. If so, there was no wind now ; the ribbon fell limp and motionless. He could not shake off the conviction that the hand itself had created the notes which he had heard. He could not bring himself to touch it — but he stooped, and listened, and one string still vibrated faintly.

There was no more sleep for him that night. He tossed about, thinking deeply, and growing every moment more perplexed and troubled. He appeared the next morning with the haggard air of a man who had spent the night in dissipation. He did not stop at the restaurant for his breakfast, but went directly out carrying the tin box. He had determined to throw it into the Seine, but as he loitered along the Pont des Arts, felt himself too closely observed by the stream of early passers : there seemed to be a *sergeant de ville* at every convenient angle.

There were boatmen below whenever he looked over the parapet, who could easily have rescued the object ; his conduct would inevitably excite suspicion, and he might possibly be arrested as a murderer striving to dispose of his victim piece-meal. The fresh morning air, moreover, braced his nerves, and he determined to finish his picture before disposing of the hand. He was so far recovered that he bought a bunch of roses at a flower-stand ; they were American Beauties. The name suggested a lady who had been neglected of late, and he determined to take them to her that afternoon. Before breakfasting he ran up stairs, placed the box upon a table and the roses beside it in a vase of water.

When he re-entered the room he found the vase overturned — the water dripping to the floor — the box also upset — the hand grasping the roses so tightly that the clenched nails had pierced the buds and were dyed crimson. All his gay *insouciance* vanished, but he posed the hand upon the strings and began to paint mechanically. The pranks of this ghastly little hand were growing more and more inexplicable.

Toward evening he shut it in the box, and weighted the top with a heavy illuminated missal. When he ordered his dinner he was relieved to see that Madame Bonvin was not at her desk ; he did not enjoy the way in which she now looked at him, and was afraid that he could not maintain a nonchalant bearing.

As he entered his studio, he saw at a glance that the missal lay open, and the hand across one leaf, the index-finger pointing to a certain line. He read it with a start of surprise — “ *Priez pour moi.* ”

“ Pray for you ! ” he exclaimed, in something like indignation, “ how can I do that if I do not know who you are ? Will you do me the favor to write your name ? ”

He placed a pen within the fingers, cramped them into position, laid the hand upon a sheet of writing paper and sat down to watch. The hand remained immovable — after a time he fell asleep. When he awoke it was quite dark. Lighting the apartment he noticed with satisfaction that the hand had not moved but remained just where he had placed it.

But no, it had moved ; for in an immature girlish script was written : *Clochette, le vingt Juin.*

What did this mean ? It was now the twenty-sixth, very possibly this was the date on which the owner of the hand had died. The conviction closed upon him that this poor girl was Clochette. There was only one way to ascertain the truth, for Madame had declined to speak to him.

Terrible as the ordeal would be, he must look upon the face of the dead girl in the dissecting room of the *École de Médecine* ; when morning came he would investigate the matter thoroughly.

Calmed by this resolution he slept only to awaken after a time with that strange, undefinable feeling that some one was in the room. It was pitchy dark. He lay silent, listening intently. Yes, there was a light footfall coming nearer, nearer, and suddenly there was a touch upon his hand and then into his palm there stole and rested something stiff and cold — the hand !

He started up in bed and the physical repugnance caused by the shock was so intense, that he flung the hand as far as he could.

He heard it strike against the wall with a dull thud, and then he heard again the light quick footsteps and a rustle of drapery. He sprang from his bed in the direction of the sound, stumbled over some obstacle, and fell. When he rose and lighted the gas the studio was vacant ; but the hand lay where it had been thrown.

That clammy, horrible sensation had not been imagined ; it had really lain within his own ; but he raised the ghastly object almost reverently, for he could not help feeling that Clochette had loved him so intensely

that death had no power to keep her from him; more than this, he realized now, as never before, that in so far as his worldly, calculating soul was capable of such a pure emotion, he had loved Clochette.

He could hardly wait until morning to go to his friend and tell him the entire story. There, he entreated to be taken to the dissecting-room, to view the dead girl, and was in despair when told that he was too late.

"The mystery, so far as this poor girl is concerned, can never be solved," said the surgeon, "but take this comfort, she may not have been Clochette."

"Go back with me to my studio," he begged. "We will take the hand to a little cemetery that I know of in the suburbs, which was formerly attached to a convent of Ursuline nuns, and we will then bury it in consecrated earth. God grant that it is not Clochette's hand, but if it is I solemnly vow to be true to it."

As he turned the key to enter his studio, Carlton heard his name called softly. There, on the model stand, bending forward with eager expectation, a little paler and thinner than in the old days but with the old light in her eyes, stood Clochette.

His heart gave a great leap and he held her closely, exclaiming, "You are alive? You are indeed alive!"

"But yes," Clochette replied. "Aunt put me in the convent school, but it was *triste*, so *triste*, I could not bear it, I wanted you."

The young surgeon hemmed loudly. "I will trouble you for the tin box and its contents," he remarked. "I perceive there will be no funeral this morning."

No funeral, but a happy marriage, and Carlton occasionally told the story of the hand to his intimate friends. He has turned theosophist and has his theory,—that Clochette's spirit in its strong affection for him quitted the sleeping body and made use of the inert mechanism of the dead hand to rouse his attention, and to awaken his slumbering love.

Madame Bonvin, that strange, intense woman, who still presides over his household, listens at the key-hole while he explains these ideas. She is half vexed at her own success. It is indeed hard that the pranks of the ghostly little hand were so artistically managed that her own genius in planning the stratagems, and her cleverness in carrying them out, have not been appreciated.

"But blessed saints!" she murmurs, "these men are *si credule*, *si stupide*, that it is not even amusing to deceive them."

THE LAST CRUISE OF THE ARABELLA.

By Edwin Lassetter Bynner.

THE intense popular interest excited years ago by the sensational case of *Dorrance and Quimby vs. The Phoenix Fire Insurance Company* is still remembered by old residents of Cape Cod. The strange reticence and peculiar bearing of the chief witness for the plaintiffs made at the time a profound impression. Everybody felt that there was more in the case than came out at the trial, and for a long time the community was in a ferment of discussion and surmise which resulted in a popular reversal of the judgment of the court.

Death, after all these years, now steps in to clear up this old-time mystery.

Through the recent decease of Miss Susannah Balcom, a grandniece of Captain Wright, the heirs of that estimable spinster have come into possession of some papers of the old mariner, among which is a sealed instrument of very startling import.

The fact that Miss Balcom never broke the seals of this paper proves either that she was under injunction not to do so, or that there was in her a phenomenal lack of a certain attribute usually supposed inseparable from her sex.

With great difficulty permission has been obtained from the heirs for the publication of the following passages from the old seaman's manuscript. These passages contain what there is of public interest in his recital and sufficiently account for his behavior at the trial nearly a half-century ago.

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N. B. To all whom it may concern. This is a post-mortem paper not to be read till after I'm dead an' gon'; an' I warn any busybody thet may happen on it afore thet time to stop right here at this fust sentence or trouble may come on't. SEABORN WRIGHT.

To begin with, I want to say that my folks as fur back as I can remember, was plain, sea-goin' people with no hifalutin' about any on'em. My mother's name, afore she was merried, was Balcom, an' betwixt the Wrights an' the Balcoms 'twas always considered nip and tuck which was the most hard-workin', matter-of-fact, close-fisted lot.

Both families had always lived on the Cape and always follered the sea, an' some o' the stanchest three-masters thet ever run out o' New Bedford hev ben sailed by the Wrights an' the Balcoms, an' they'll tell ye so down there to this very day.

Thet, of course, hain't anythin' to do' with what I'm goin' to tell, other than to make it clear thet there warn't no head-screws loose in any o' our tribe. Another p'int is we'd hed fair to middlin' luck, an' luck's a thing not to be sneezed at in a sea-goin' family.

For myself I took to the water like a young duck afore I'd got my pinfeathers, an' as they say, I "got on," but no faster, p'r'aps, than any other young feller thet keeps his eye peeled to the weather-quarter, an' don't fool away his chances. Which means thet afore I hed turned five an' thirty I was app'inted master of the *Arabella*, an' thet's how I come to be writin' this.

Speakin' o' thet: its a mighty curi's yarn I'm settin' out to spin, fokes can think what they please. I don't ask anybody to b'lieve anything he don't want to, but the amount of it is I know things 'bout the business thet nobody else doos, an' after thinkin' on't over for twenty years an' more, I've concluded to make a clean breast on't, come what will.

'Twas in the spring of 1858 thet I took command of the *Arabella*. She was built by one o' the best makers thet ever laid down a keel. She'd b'en a couple o' voyages to the Pacific an' got the gloss taken off, but she was as stanch an' sea-worthy as any craft o' her tonnage thet ever floated, ef I do say it.

But one fact thet I perticklerly want bore in mind is, thet spite o' anything thet is sot down in this paper, I ain't an' never hev b'en a grain superstitious. None o' the Wrights or the Balcoms uther was ever accused o' thet failin'.

But to go on from where I left off: towards the fall o' the year I spoke of, as I was layin' at Taber's Wharf, New Bedford, jest after I took command of the *Arabella*, I had the offer of a cargo of cotton prints for the Mediterranean. The consignors was a new firm thet had lately come to New Bedford, an' they was strangers to me. But as they offered a good, clean, safe cargo, as they didn't stand out on terms, an' didn't object to our figgers, we warn't long in strikin' a bargain.

It's all wall enough to say now, lookin' back on't, thet they acted queer 'bout the business. Ye can say thet of most anythin' thet ever happened thet went wrong. Some fokes air awful smart forseein' back-side foremost. But I'm settin' down the honest truth here, or tryin' to, an' I'm bound to say thet nuther I nor anybody else thought o' ther' bein' anythin' out-of-the-way with Dorrance and Quimby in them days.

They warn't no gre't to look at, nuther on 'em, but they was fair-spoken enough. Dorrance was a big feller ruther off-hand in his manners an' didn't hev much to say, while tother one was a pale, nervous, little man who seemed allers to hev sumthin' on his mind, an' never paid attention to what anybody else said.

Dorrance skurse ever come down to the wharf, but Quimby was there most every day. He used to set on the deck starin' down inter the hold, a-watchin' of 'em stow away the packin'-cases as ef 'twas a show goin' on.

I was standin' by him one day when ther' come a kink in the windlass or some hitch in gittin' a load down, an' I catched hold o' one o' the cases an' swung it round. "Be them Manchester prints?" I asked.

He looked at me, an' the pupils o' his eyes turned from a wishy-washy blue to jet black. "Why?"

"Cos they're the lightest-weight goods I ever hefted."

"They're heavy enough for where they're goin'" said a gruff voice close to my side. It was Dorrance, who had jest come up, but Quimby he coughed an' turned away, an' didn't make no remark.

Another time I come acrost him settin' there, an' he looked so kind o' sick I told him he'd better come along o' us, thet the voyage would set him up. He turned almost with a jump, an' pertended to laugh, sayin' in a little kind o' flustered way thet he guessed he'd wait till some other time. I didn't think nothin' o' what he said or the way he looked then, but I hev many a time sence.

Along towards the last Quimby seemed to git more nervous, and was in a fever for us to git off, as he said, "while the fair weather lasted." I joked him 'bout it once or twice, askin' what difference it made to him 'bout the fair weather, an' whether his cargo warn't insured, when he give me another o' them looks o' his — a kind o' scart look, like a cat in the dark — an' muttered sumthin' 'bout not hevin' anythin' to do with the insurance, thet Dorrance allers 'tended to thet.

To make a long story short, we got the cargo stowed at last, an' cleared the port on the thirteenth o' October. Ef I hed ben superstitious, I should never a sailed on thet day, for besides bein' the thirteenth it was Friday, an' my wife begged me not to go.

Friday or not, 'twas as fine a day as ever I see, an' we got off in good shape. The bark was in first-class condition, an' loaded jest right. I hed taken extry pains stowin' o' the cargo, for it allers pays in the p'int o' stiddy runnin'.

Quimby, he come down to see us off, an' he was as fussy as an old maid all the mornin'. The last I see o' him he was pacin' up an' down Taber's Wharf lookin' after us, an' I remember thinkin' ef ever I see a sick man, he was one. I was goin' to say thet was the last ever I sot

eyes on him in the flesh, but thet's a question I'd better leave for everybody to decide for himself, when he gits through readin' this ere paper.

The first part o' the voyage all went well enough. The wind held out most amazin', an' the chances seemed fair for a quick run. However, I dunno why 'twas, but I'm free to say thet I didn't feel pertickler perky. Th' warn't anythin' the matter, — I eat well an' slep' like a log; but somehow I warn't real chipper as I'd oughter ben with the prospect o' earnin' sech a good freight.

The fust time anythin' happened wuth speakin' of was when we was fourteen days out, on the evenin' o' October 27th. (But right here an' now, afore I go any further, I want solemnly to hold up my right hand the way they do in court, an' swear thet what I'm goin' to set down shall be the truth, the whole truth, an' nothin' but the truth, an' thet bein' understood, I don't care a —.)

As I said, we was sailin' along thet evenin' in latitude $34^{\circ} 16' 10''$ north, longitude $25^{\circ} 3' 8''$ west; I hed jest gone below, — the fust mate hed the watch, — four bells was strikin' as I sot there in the cabin all alone knockin' the ashes out o' my pipe an' thinkin' o' turnin' in, when all at once I felt a cold draught acrost my neck as ef a door hed ben opened. I looked up an' — b'leeve it or not, as ye see fit — there stood Quimby right afore me at the other end o' the cabin, in the very same clothes an' the same half-scared look he hed on thet mornin' we left him on Taber's Wharf.

Wall, I didn't move a muscle nor speak a word, but sot there stock-still thinkin' on't over. But when, spite o' any way I could turn, I couldn't think o' no way o' accountin' for't, I own up thet the hair kind o' lifted round the roots all over my head, an' I couldn't a spoke ef you was to a shot me.

I dunno how long thet lasted, but after a while I seemed to come to a little. I thought to myself I was master o' thet vessel, and ther warn't nobody in this world or the next hed any better rights in thet cabin than I hed. So I made a spurt to git on my pins, but ther warn't no more gristle in my knees than in a baby's; an' when at last I managed to speak, 'twas in a husky little voice no more like mine than a pigeon-woodpecker's. "What you doin' o' here?" I asked.

He kind o' started to hear me speak, an' half turned towards the door of the companion-way.

"Thet's you, Quimby, ain't it?"

He begun to move off as ef it bothered him to be questioned.

"What d'ye want?" I went on. At thet he stuck out his forefinger, an' beckonin' o' me to foller him, slid away out o' the cabin.

After he was gone I begun to shake like a leaf an' to feel as ef sumthin' awful hed happened. I scrambled up on deck as fast as I could an' sot there smokin' my pipe till the cool night air calmed me down.

Bimeby six bells sounded, an' I thought if I was goin' to turn in at all 'twas 'bout time; but to tell truth, I didn't hanker to go below ag'in alone, so I made some excuse to take the second officer down with me, an' we took some grog together; but I never let on to him thet anythin' hed took place. Next mornin', thinkin' it over, I concluded my liver was out o' order, an' took a couple o' blue-pills.

Wall, things went on all right for two or three days, an' I come to the conclusion, as fokes will after a thing like thet gits a little stale, thet it hed never happened, an' thet it was jest two parts bile an' two parts imagination; an' altogether I felt mighty sheepish about it, an' made up my mind ef any sech thing happened ag'in I should do very different.

But I didn't — nary bit. The very night I come to thet conclusion, as I was layin' sound asleep in my bunk, all at once sumthin' woke me up, an' ther was thet critter ag'in standin' starin' at me, jest as he did afore. I made a great spurt to roar out as I do sometimes at the crew, "What the hell do ye want here?" But my voice was so squeaky you couldn't a heered it acrost the room. My hair lifted jest as it did afore, an' I broke into a cold sweat all over. 'Twas wuss than the fust time, for I felt so helpless layin' there on my back. I couldn't a run away or hollered out ef I hed tried, an' I felt as useless as a suckin' babe. I would a given most anythin' to hear somebody move or speak, but 'twas stiller than the grave, 'cept for the noise o' the wind an' sea.

It seemed as if I laid there a dog's age tryin' to git spunk to speak ag'in. At last I made a move to roll over, when all at once the critter raised his finger as afore an' beckoned me to foller him.

He kind o' slid away, as he did the fust time, 'thout speakin' or makin' any sound, all the time lookin' back an' beckonin'.

I hed never ben sick a day in my life up to thet time, but I made up my mind then thet I was in a bad way an' needed a course o' physic sure. I hedn't nothin' but some Drake's Plantation Bitters an' quinine aboard, but I give myself a heavy dosin' with them.

All the same I didn't want no more o' that kind o' dream, an' so after that I made my cabin-boy sleep jest outside my state-room door so 't I could speak ef anythin' happened. I felt pooty small to be a-doin' this, an' passed it off with some excuse, but nobody mistrusted.

Wall, things run along so for two or three days more. I begun to feel all right ag'in, an' thought the bitters an' quinine hed done the business, when one afternoon the thing happened ag'in in a way ther' couldn't be no mistake about.

I hed all along ben wishin' it would come in the daytime when I should be sure o' hevin' my faculties all about me, an' it couldn't be laid down to dreams or nightmares.

Wall, I hed my wish with a vengeance. One afternoon in broad daylight, after I hed been takin' an observation, I was goin' aft with the glass in my hand, when jest afore I got to the companion-way, there the critter stood right in my path.

I hed said to myself over an' over thet ef ever I did see it in the daytime I should grab it, sure as fate, an' settle the whole question in a minute. But, Lord, Harry! I couldn't no more than as ef I hed ben nailed down to the deck. Howsever, ef I couldn't move, I could see, an' I gawped with all my might. There was no kind o' doubt this time. I see the critter plain as day. He hed the same cloes he wore in New Bedford, a dark-checked suit with his necktie slipped round to one side an' his hat tilted back as ef his forehead was hot.

I turned round an' beckoned the second mate, who stood near by overseein' the men holy-stone the deck. He come up, I took him by the shoulders, turned him round, an' pinterd right at the companion-way.

"Do you see anythin' over there?" I asked, as nateral as I could speak.

He looked, an' shook his head; an' all the whole time the critter stood there a-beckonin' to me.

The mate he stared as ef he thought 'twas a little queer, so I pretended the sheathin' o' the companion-way was gittin' out o' plumb. Of course he didn't agree with me, but he said he'd 'tend to it when he got a chance, an' went back to his work.

It gin me the wust start I'd hed. I see now the matter was with me. I begun to think my mind couldn't be all right, an' I tell ye that shook me up powerful—the thought thet I couldn't trust myself no longer. I brooded over the idee two or three days, wonderin' whether I hedn't better make a clean breast on't to the fust mate, an' notify him he must be ready to take hold any minute.

But I couldn't bear to do this; so I held off an' made a trade with myself that ef the critter come agin I wouldn't hesitate no longer.

I remember 'twas one night, jest as I was turnin' in, I settled thet pint. I felt extry good thet night; the cabin-boy was snorin' away jest outside my door, an' my six-shooter laid right there on the table.

"I guess I'm 'bout through with thet business now," I said, with a little chuckle; "the medicine has cleared out my system."

An' it only shows how much we know 'bout what's goin' to happen. That very night the critter come ag'in! I woke up an' found him standin' there. But I was gittin' kind o' used to him now, an' wasn't

so scart. I sot up in bed, an' was jest goin' to sing out to the cabin-boy, when Quimby, as if he suspected what I was up to, turned and edged away, a-beckonin' as afore.

All at once I says to myself: "What if I should foller him, an' find out what the critter wants this time ef it kills me?"

No sooner said than done. I jumped up, grabbed my six-shooter, an' started after him.

He kep' about ten paces ahead, an' seemed to slide right through everythin' as ef 'twarn't there. I didn't like that kind o' propellin' an' was more'n half a mind to turn back, but the feel o' my shootin'-iron kind o' kep' up my spunk, an' then ag'in I thought by keepin' on I might mebbe put a stop to the thing once an' for all.

The critter took a bee-line for the hold. I follered, but I don't remember to this day, how we got down there.

Fust off, 'twas pitch darkness, but pooty soon I noticed a little glimmer o' light an' it seemed to come from the critter himself. 'Twas sumthin' like the light from burnin' alcohol only a good deal paler. Anyway it was enough to show the way.

Quimby, ef ye're a mind to call him so, never minded the heaps an' piles o' boxes. He went over 'em an' through 'em 'thout any fuss, allers a-lookin' back—he'd quit beckonin' now—an' actin' as ef he wanted to lend me a hand.

An' I tell ye I needed it; 'twas a tuff job fer me. Ther' warnt air enough down there fer a rabbit, an' so hot the sweat jest run off'n me in streams.

We worked our way along for'ard—the critter allers keepin' a little grain ahead—till at last, jest as I was gittin' fired up an' makin' up my mind I wouldn't go no further fer man or devil, he stopped an' givin' me a look p'inted down at sumthin'.

I clim' along on tenter-hooks till I got where I could see, an' stopped, all puffin' an' pantin' an' sweatin', an' looked down where he p'inted.

Ther' warn't nothin' there! 'cept jest a packin'-case kind o' tilted on its side but not a mite different from all the rest o' the packin'-cases.

Then I *did* git mad, an' 'twas 'bout time. Here this pesky critter hed ben at me for most a fortnight wakin' of me up nights, makin' me physic myself most to death, makin' me doubt my own senses an' all only to bring me down there on a tom-fool's errand.

I caught my breath an' clutched my shootin'-iron, an' says, says I:

"Look a here, gol durn ye! I've hed enough o' this business. What d'ye want? Speak up now! Ef ye've got anythin' to say, say it quick or I'll put a bullet through ye live or dead!"

But the critter didn't seem to mind my threat a mite. He stood there stock still pintin' down to thet pertickler box.

I edged up a little nearer an' as long as I couldn't see anythin' the matter I stooped over an' put out my hand to feel.

I drawed it back quicker'n a flash.

Thet box was as hot as a stove!

I don't well know what happened after thet, 'cept thet the critter disappeared an' left me there alone.

Whether I fell, gropin' my way aft or jest fainted away from the heat an' want o' air, I couldn't say. All I know is, thet when I come to, I found myself down there in the hold as weak as a rat an' it took all the strength an' gumption I hed to git out. I must a ben down there a couple o' hours or more, fer jest as I got back to the cabin I heerd seven bells strikin'.

There laid the cabin-boy a-snorin' away jest as ef nothin' was the matter. I was so mad thet I routed him out an' sent him up on deck 'thout stoppin' to think 'twarn't his fault what hed happened.

Wall thet night's muddle decided me on one thing. Whether 'twas my liver or my brains didn't make no difference, I warn't in no kind o' shape to command a vessel, an' the sooner I put things out o' my hands the better fer me an' all concerned.

I turned in an' got a wink o' sleep the fust thing, so's to hev my mind — what I hed left — as clear as it could be. When I woke up I tried fust off to persuade myself 'twas a nightmare, but when I see the bruises all over my bare legs, which I got blunderin' over them boxes in the hold, I knew then 'twarn't no dream.

Jest as quick as I got my cloes on I sent fer the fust mate. As soon as he come in I locked the cabin door. I dunno why I did, 'cept thet I'd got kind o' shaky and mistrustful o' myself.

"Don't you think strange," I said, seein' him give me a queer look. "I got some seri's business to do with you an' I don't want ter be interrupted!"

Then I sot down an' told him the whole story. He never said a word, but 'twas as plain as day what he thought. He thought I was ravin' crazy. I told him so an' he kind o' changed color.

"Yeah," I said, "you think I'm crazy an' you're right! I am; th' ain't no doubt on't. You don't b'leeve thet critter's ben here at all an' of course he hain't; all the same I see him an' follered him, an' ef you could see my legs you'd think so. Now I only ask one thing o' you when you take command o' this ship, an' thet is, thet you take a gang o' men instantan' an' overhaul them packin'-cases in the hold. Of course ther' ain't nothin' there, but it'll set my mind to rest an' make it more comfortable fer me the rest o' the trip."

The mate was a quiet, steady-goin' feller, an' no doubt he would a-

done jest what I asked him to, but he never hed the chance. Afore I'd got the words well out o' my mouth, an' afore he hed time to answer, ther' come the almightiest racket ye ever heerd. It seemed as ef a whole regiment tumbled pell-mell down the companion-way, an' hammered an' pounded at the cabin-door, yellin' like devils: "Fire! Fire! Fire!—The ship's afire!"

I gin the mate one look an' he understood it. Ther' warn't no more talk 'bout givin' up the command. I was up on deck like a flash o' lightnin', an' I never acted more cool or stiddy than I did all through thet business.

We fought thet fire fer three mortal hours. I never see sech a fire. No Manchester prints ever burnt like thet afore. 'Twas a fight for life, but Lord Harry! 'twarn't no manner o' use. The minute I got on deck an' looked around, I knew 'twas all up with us.

But in the midst of it all the lookout hed sighted a sail on our wind-ward quarter. We run up a signal o' distress and she bore down on us. She didn't get there a mite too soon. We worked till the last minute and then tumbled into the boats. I was the last to go. 'Twas a tuff pull on me—the hardest I ever knowed. I turned round to take one more look o' the dear old craft when what should I see but thet critter ag'in on his old stampin'-ground near the companion-way, with his white, scarey face all surrounded by fire and smoke, standin' there starin' at me an' a wringin' o' his hands.

It was a Swedish bark that picked us up, an' they was very kind an' attentive. No matter how we got home. We did git there an' then the row begun. The underwriters wouldn't pay, an' Dorrance he sued 'em.—I warn't surprised to hear that Quimby was dead. I said to start with he was a sick-lookin' man.

But I couldn't help myself; Dorrance subpeenyd me an' I hed to take the stand. Them lawyers badgered for a whole day but they couldn't git anythin' out o' me I didn't want to tell. When they asked me if I *knowed* how thet vessel ketched fire I swore I didn't. But when they asked me ef I hed any theory 'bout it I swore I hed but I wouldn't tell. They threatened me with everythin' an' tried to scare me into it, but the judge he ruled I needn't.

What I said on the stand anybody can read; it's all sot down in one o' them lawyer-books they say. What I didn't say is sot down here, an' ef I hed ben a superstitious man I wouldn't ask anybody to b'leeve it. I often wondered how Dorrance prospered with thet insurance-money; he cleared out from New Bedford right after the trial, an' nothin' has ever ben heerd o' him sence.

D'ANIMA.

By Anna C. Brackett.

WHY he had come back I did not know, and had not even ventured to guess. In fact, after I had begun to suspect that he might be a ghost, I did not think much about it anyway. The fact that he was so was accepted as one of the many mildly surprising things in modern civilization, including Darwin and Edison, which I was in the hourly habit of encountering. There was really nothing astonishing in the fact that he or any one else should be a ghost, or, as the French say, a returner. He was a member of my club, so that we often met. One peculiar thing about him was, that all his acquaintances — and his circle was very large, even for a member of our club — nay, even the most ignorant and rough, unbred people who came in contact with him, were sure that they had known him a long time, that is, practically always. I suppose that this was because he seemed to every person he met — as some of our New England men expressed it — “like one of my own folks.” I have repeatedly, out of curiosity, asked a friend with whom I had chanced to find him in conversation, “How did you come to get acquainted with D’Anima?” and invariably received the answer, “I declare I don’t know! It was so long ago; it seems as if I had always known him just as well as I know him now. I think we must have always known each other more or less.” I have since learned that a similar feeling is always experienced by those who talk with ghosts, and that they may often be recognized by this effect which they produce, quite involuntarily on their part, though all other signs of their nature fail.

As to D’Anima, one would have noticed nothing particular about him if one came across him any day — I should rather say any night; for when I began to reflect on it, I remembered that I had never met him in day-light, though this fact had never struck me before. He had so many friends, as I said, that when he professed himself unable to go to a picnic or to accept an invitation to a country-house, we always thought that he had agreed to go to some other one of a hundred houses which were pleadingly open to him, and so only regretted the prior engagement on our own account. As to age, he might have been anywhere

between thirty and forty, though his face was so mobile that it sometimes had all the freshness of a youth or even of a child; and then again I have seen him look much older, as if he carried a long, patient life behind him. As to features, there was nothing marked; clear complexion, gray eyes, beautifully soft fine hair and beard. He never shaved, so that his mouth could be only guessed at. The figure was neither tall nor short, neither thin nor large. I think I never saw him pass or watched him stand, that I did not afterwards catch myself unconsciously repeating, from Yussuf's *Ballad of East and West*:

“With that he whistled his only son that dropped from a mountain crest —
He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he looked like a lance in rest.”

Further than this, there was nothing of mark, either in body or dress, which latter was always perfect. I remember now what old Brown, of Kutt & Phytte, our tailors, said one day: I had had a great deal of trouble about a coat they were making for me, and had to go there so many times that I was quite tired of the thing before I wore it at all. Phytte was looking at it with anxious eyes for the last time, when Brown said: “It is queer, sir, we never have any trouble about Mr. D'Anima's clothes. I have never in all my professional life, sir, seen such a gentleman. We don't have to fit him at all. It seems as if the cloth, no matter how thick, always takes his shape as soon as he puts on a garment. We have only to finish his clothes and send them, and they are always right; and, if I do say it myself, sir, it makes me proud to see him walk past our establishment, and to know that under the collar of that coat and the fob of those trousers are the names of Kutt & Phytte, sir. It does, indeed, sir.” I did not think much of this at the time; I only wished that they had so little trouble with me, both for my own sake and for that of Brown, whose hair was rapidly growing gray. D'Anima wore no ornament of any kind, unless a watch-chain may be so called. And the watch-chain was indeed the most astonishing piece of workmanship that I ever saw. If you looked at it casually, it did not attract attention at all; but if you were with him intimately often as I was, you soon began to look at it curiously, and finally took the liberty of asking to examine it. Then what had seemed a simple chain of links showed itself to be a marvellously complicated affair, in which each link, whether of gold or platinum — for the chain was composed of these two metals in equal proportion — was seen to be made of other links, and those of still others, in what seemed to be an endless succession. And if in despair at the fineness of the workmanship, you took a microscope, the result of examination was still the same. This chain he always wore, even in company, but no one seemed to think it strange. In fact, nothing that he did or said excited particular comment, even when it

was different from usual custom. Every one grew quiet in talking to him, whether tuned to the particularly musical tone of his voice or influenced by the charm of his manner. The only exception to this effect that I ever saw was with a very young baby. As soon as he touched it a wonderful look of intelligence came into its eyes, and it became most delightfully excited. This excitement went on till the little one began to cry piteously and hopelessly, as if it had lost something, and clung to him so that the frightened mother could with difficulty take it from his arms. And that seemed strange to me, because he was so gentle, and because to me the sensation in being with him was always as if I had found, instead of losing, something.

He seemed to speak all languages with equal facility, though he said he preferred English because of its wonderful flexibility and variety. As to his habits, they were very simple. He had rooms in the clubhouse, and so was perfectly independent. His taste in food, as one would have imagined, was exceedingly delicate. He demanded fine flavors both in food and drink, and was one of the best wine-tasters I ever knew. He spent much time wandering by himself or in company in the streets of the city, every phase of the busy life of which had for him a mysterious fascination. Sometimes he would take long excursions into the wildest regions of the country, mostly on foot; but it seemed to me that he always came back from these strolls weary and disappointed. Mostly he sought the poorer parts of the city or the street market in the evening. Hustled and jostled by the throng of poor women on the lookout for a bargain in food for the morrow's meals, sauntering up and down the pavement in the red glow of the flaring torches, he was as much at home as in the soft light of the ball-room; and, indeed, the crowd in the street did not seem to tire him so much as that of fashion. "O, that is real!" he said to me one night after we had come in from one of these expeditions, and had flung ourselves down, tired, in the delicious seclusion of his rooms. "Every one of those faces, every one of those figures, tells the truth, and is individual. But at the ball last night, and in fact at all the social entertainments we go to, don't you see how every face is like every other? They look, as to expression, like the row of faces in the street-car that we sat opposite the other night. They all wish that it was over, and promise themselves that when it is, they will have a little real life, and not this everlasting acting. But they grow so used to being on the stage and posturing and talking for an audience, that they soon do the same for themselves when they are alone, and so the whole thing becomes acting. Now, in those people we saw to-night, one can see that they are used to living face to face with realities all the time, and it is a positive rest to see them. You remember the sermon which we had the misfortune to

listen to the other evening, where Dr. Le Grand said how well it was for one to come in contact with death in the midst of daily life, and so to be made to feel the realities of the world! As if Truth, and Beauty, and Goodness, were not as real as death! And those we have around us continually! Perhaps you may say that he was preaching to the average consciousness of his hearers and not saying the best he knew. But I know better, for I was reading his thoughts, of course, and" — I looked up, and he met my questioning eyes. "You know I am a ghost, and so, of course, I see thoughts." "Well," I said, "I do know it, I think, but still, I have not liked to speak of it; and, though I know it, yet I am apt to forget that you see *me*, and do not need to hear the words I may speak. And now," I went on, gathering courage all at once, "since you have spoken of it, will you not tell me what drove you back after you were once fairly out of the world? You must remember that I cannot read your thoughts as you can mine."

D'Anima smiled at my useless words, and said, "Why not? I was homesick." "But how?" I cried. "Surely there is everything there that you could need or want. Tell me of the life there and how it is." His face grew strangely grave. "I will try," he said. And then I was conscious of a something which is to sound what the ether waves are to waves of water or air, which beat and beat within my soul in measured rhythm, but without distinct articulation. And then it stopped. I had strained my senses to catch the purport of what he uttered till I was tired, and he had watched me intently; but we both saw that it had been of no use. "No," he said, "you cannot hear. I had almost fancied that you, who are so true, might catch some meaning, and I cannot tell you of that place in any other language. All I can do is to tell you about myself. I am sorry. I suppose if I said to a child five years old, and said it never so distinctly, that the square described on the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares described on the other two sides, it would be about as intelligible to the child as my speech is to you. I loved the earth so! I remember when I was a little boy, often looking at the moon and thinking how hard it must be to miss her kind, familiar face after I was dead, and wondering how I could get along with everything strange and different about me. I thank God I did not find everything unfamiliar to me when I went up through the fire-gate, for I was John Maynard the Lake Erie pilot, and I headed our steamer for the shore and stood to my wheel, holding her steady, and saved every passenger on board, as I ought to have done; and so duty and lofty daring and faithfulness were familiar to me, and I was not quite a stranger. That was a great thing. But it is very sad sometimes when a man comes there whose only thought has been money or things that do not belong there, for he can neither see nor hear nor

exist. Everything is so strange to him that he cannot touch it, and he is quite bereft. Yes, I breathed some air that was familiar to me; but — Do you know Charles Lamb?" And he took up the "Essays of Elia" from the table and read: "I am in love with this green earth, — the face of town and country, the unspeakable rural solitudes, and the sweet security of streets. I am content to stand still at the age to which I am arrived — I and my friends; to be no younger, no richer, no handsomer. My household gods plant a terribly fixed foot, and are not rooted up without blood. They do not willingly seek Lavinian shores. A new state of being staggers me. Sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, and society, and the cheerful glass, and candle-light, and fireside conversations, and innocent vanities, and jests, and irony itself." "Thus it was with Lamb and thus it was with me," he said, laying down the book. "I suppose I had gone too suddenly out of the beautiful earth and from the lake that I loved so! It may have been that. I know, as I was holding the wheel while the flames came nearer and nearer and I was all alone, separated by a wall of fire from the rest of the people, I was looking at the shores and the trees and the soft color of the sky over the lovely lake, and trying to paint them in my mind, so that I should have that, at any rate, left in my memory. And then I heard the scrape of the keel on the sand, and the smoke hid it all; and then" — here I became conscious of the wonderful inarticulate melody I had known before, which again suddenly stopped. He smiled at his own forgetfulness of my incapacity. "And I was homesick for my earth," he went on, "and so — I came back. It was the best way.

"But the earth is a little different now. I know, of course, what every one is thinking before he speaks; and then, when I go into the woods to escape the contradictions, I can no more see simply the waving branches and the cut of the leaves and the rough bark. I see the sap rising and the cells forming, dividing, dividing and piling up, and the swift chemical changes to green and brown; and with animals it is the same. Besides the outward form, which is clear, the body is perfectly transparent to me, so that I watch all the subtle alchemy of digestion and see the blood fill vein and artery and hear the clang of the valves of the heart. And I see the discharges of nerve-force in the cells of the brain one after another, running in swift lines along their most wonted paths, and I watch the quiver of the vocal cords as the singer gives forth the melody. And the most wonderful combinations I see, though of course I do not comprehend them all or many of them. And so it is no longer the same that it was when I was alive, or rather, before I was dead," he said, smiling again his rare, sweet smile as he detected him-

self in trying to express in human language the things which could not be thus uttered. "You know now why I selected you from the rest for a companion. I knew the truth and singleness of you. But I could not speak to you till you should ask of me, for that is the way," he said. "You can have nothing but what you ask for and seek, though I must have everything, because it seeks me. I longed for my beautiful earth and all the things that I had loved so! The pull was too strong for me, and now there is only one deliverance for me. I must wait."

A multitude of thoughts surged through me. There was no need for me to speak. He smiled. "Yes," he said, "I *have* seen Socrates and Plato and Æschylus. I have walked with them and listened to them. Yes, and Marcus Aurelius, too, and Chaucer and Milton and Shakespeare," he answered, as the names came leaping up in my eager thought. "But what of that? You can do the same, and you do not do it. Didn't I see them all in your book-case the other night, and hosts of others? And yet you spend your time with Tom, Dick, and Harry, and throw it away at entertainments, when you might be every evening in the company of the undying dead. And yet you think you want to know them! Is that not so?"

This was all we said that night; but, ever after, as was natural, we were even more continually together. I suppose it will be quite impossible to convey to those of my readers who have never knowingly met a ghost, the exquisite delight of such companionship, the habitual compulsion to absolute truth in me moreover, working out its inevitable refining and elevating effect upon character. To be really known just as I was — to be sure that I had no need of careful selection in words lest my hearer should misunderstand me; to find my thought instantly responded to and recognized; not to be obliged to relate a series of events lying in my memory in order to render clear to my listener the reason for my course of action, — all this filled me with an abounding sense of rest. It was not that D'Anima could always explain to me the things I wanted to know, but he always understood me. And to him I was in a measure useful, when the press of conflicting things became too strong for his ease. In his company almost constantly, I grew to have a power of recognizing ghosts as I met them day by day and place by place. I knew that they knew me so far as their own nature permitted them to do so, but I never cared to speak to them in a way which would enable them to acknowledge it. There was no need; for in one soul lying open to me as was that of my friend, the whole universe was contained. But, how many ghosts there are!

And so time went on. One evening we were at a reception where were gathered many celebrated for wit, knowledge and work. Now that I knew my friend, it was delightful for me to watch him in such

company, and to know in some measure what he must see, though he could not tell me. The women who were there did not know that to come into his presence was to put on the magic test-girdle of the old fairy story. He did not much like women, that is, the women we met in society, and no wonder, for there always was a certain confusion of truth in them arising from the necessity which such women generally find of thinking one thing and speaking another, till they become a puzzle often to themselves. But he had a strange fascination over women, and when in company was generally surrounded by a circle of them. With their quicker intuition, they felt dimly that there was something unusual about him, and they pressed towards the mystery in vain. I may mention that when you see a man thus surrounded, you will be apt to find that he is a ghost if you ask him, though you would not probably select that moment to urge the question. It would not, however, be more strange than was the inquiry put to D'Anima that evening as he stood there in the centre of the room. One of the fashionable women who are ambitious to be thought capable of reasoning on the most abstruse subjects, and who go about, rushing in where angels fear to tread, came up suddenly, saying in her "brilliant" manner, and so loud as to be heard by everybody near, "I am going to ask Mr. D'Anima what he thinks." And then, "Do tell me now, do you believe in immortality?" I shivered. D'Anima, however, turning from those with whom he had been talking and whose conversation the new-comer had interrupted after the fashion of the reception-goer, looked at her gently full in the face, and she stopped as if bewildered and dazzled. An almost painful silence fell upon the circle; but this was quickly dissipated by the adroitly-managed awkward movement of a woman standing near, by which she upset the tray of wine-glasses borne by an attendant. The tension was over. No harm had been done. The glasses were picked up, the swirl of general talk began again, and D'Anima, offering his arm to the awkward lady, walked with her to another room, leaving the question unanswered save by that one look.

"Who was that?" I asked of the person at my right, "for, luckily, you know everybody." "Miss Clare, the teacher," she said. "Have you never met her? She is very famous just now, because by her skilful inventive thought she has the honor of having utterly destroyed the whole system of competitive examinations, which have been for so long the bane of our efforts at rational education. It is an interesting story, and we all owe her a debt of gratitude. She is at the head of one of our largest schools, and at the recent competition her girls answered every question put to them with correctness, and of course took the prize. But it was so remarkable that there should not have been a trip or a break all through, even from the very stupidest and slowest girls,

that a committee of investigation was appointed, and when Miss Clare appeared before it and was questioned, she at once answered with perfect frankness that she had hypnotized all her girls, and that therefore they could not help answering correctly. She explained that, since it was perfectly clear that what the community wanted was correct answers to a certain set of disconnected questions, and not reasoning or real knowledge, she had spent the time which otherwise she would have had to use in preparing them for the examination, in teaching them really valuable things and training their reason, and then, when the examination took place, had willed each of them to give the correct answers, which of course they did, at no expense of time or trouble to them, and to the perfect satisfaction of the examining Board. If she had not been so absolutely truthful a character, you see, she would of course have left some of the girls to make mistakes, or have willed them to do so, that there might be an air of probability about the affair, and even then have taken the prize and had the glory of success; but she had the courage to put the whole matter to the most severe test for the sake of the schools and the children; and the result is, that she is to-day, as I said, the most famous woman in her line. Of course, as soon as the thing was made public, it was open to any and all teachers to do the same, and so examinations became of absolutely no value; and now there is, I am glad to say, some hope for real teachers. Let me introduce you to her." And so saying, she led me away, where we found D'Anima and Miss Clare, who was looking my friend full in the face, while she listened to him with a very unusual fearlessness born of perfect truthfulness and humility.

We talked with Miss Clare till the company broke up. When we reached the club-house we went, as usual, to D'Anima's rooms. He seemed to me more than usually excited. He was always quiet, but a new light shone through his eyes into mine as he said: "Why did I never meet that woman before? 'The ideal woman, practical, spiritual, of all of earth, life, love, to me the best.' I thought I had known before that the earth was beautiful, but I never knew how beautiful it is. Of course I could see; and what did I see? Such clearness of soul, such sweetness and such strength I have never known. It was as if I were in my other country; and two or three times I began to speak to her in its language, till I was recalled by her look of bewilderment, as if she half understood. And I believe she did—I know she did. But, alas for me! This only makes 'the too much loved earth more lovely,' and I must wait." With these words, which seemed to be the key-note of his whole existence, he stopped, and I said good-night and left him. From that day the new light and the new trouble never left his face. He spent much of his time with Miss Clare, and I missed that out of

my life with a strange sense of hunger. To my loss, he gave up gradually all our walks and little expeditions, and was seldom seen in society. It was but natural, since he had found in one soul all that had formerly attracted him in nature or in art. All the pictures before which he used to linger; all the Wagner music, of which he had never before been able to hear enough, and which he used to say did not, like other music, come forth into the house from the fixed place of the orchestra, but throbbed alive from every point of space therein; all the human interests which had had such power to draw and hold him, — all were now concentrated in one woman's sweet and gracious presence. It was easier for him, but it was hard for me. I, too, had now to learn to wait, and to do it with patience — the masculine patience which does not petrify and destroy, and which is so hard to attain. But a new tie and a stronger confusion had come into his existence, and the pain of the love was almost more than he could bear. More and more gentle, more and more gracious, he grew, with almost a despair in his face, as the days went on. And I was glad for him with a pitiful gladness, and the days went on.

But one morning the newspaper flung out at the head of its leading column, under a mass of head-lines, this: "The Buffalo and Niagara Falls special, which left the Grand Central station at 7.30 o'clock last night, was delayed on signal at 8.16, half-way between Hastings and Dobbs Ferry. The conductor sent the rear brakeman back on the track to stop any coming train. The brakeman thought the next train was a local, due to stop at Hastings, and went to the station there to wait for it. While he was talking to the operator at the station, the St. Louis express, which left the Grand Central station at 8 o'clock, thundered past and crashed into the sleeping-car 'Gibraltar,' on the rear of the Buffalo and Niagara train. All the occupants of the sleeper, with the exception of two men very seriously injured, were killed or have since died."

I dropped the paper — I knew that the evening before, D'Anima had gone with his friend, now his betrothed, to the station to see her off for Niagara. I rushed over to the club-house, and, not stopping for the elevator, tore up the stairs to his rooms. Everything was quiet and still. When I came through the half-light of the misty winter morning in his parlor to the sleeping-room, full of the brilliant electric glow, I saw my dear friend standing turned and slightly leaning towards the door, as if waiting for me, with an unspeakable look of joy and peace in his face. As I crossed the threshold he stretched out both hands to me; but, as I stepped quickly to him and took them, the mirror opposite showed me only my own eager figure and my own pale, anxious face.

I never saw him again.

BARR'S PROBLEM.

By Julian Hawthorne.

CURLING layers of tobacco-smoke swam on the still air of the study. On approaching the large lamp on the table, they were drawn upward by the heated current underneath the shade, and discharged toward the shadowed ceiling. As they dispersed, the Professor kept adding to them, drawing in warm mouthfuls of the blue vapor, and discharging it slowly from his bearded lips, while the bowl of the briar-root glowed and sent up rings and streamers; and a recurrent low chuckle in the throat of the pipe showed that it was an old friend, rich and strong, and full of potent juice.

The lamp-light glistened warmly on the backs of books, ranked round the room on their old shelves. They were comfortable, well-made books, mellowed by time and handling. They matched the furniture, which was so fashioned as to suggest sitting in cosy postures and reading them. The whole room was warm and dim in tone; the ceiling not too high, the rugs not too new, everything showing wear, but not too much. The Professor's clothes were also well-worn, yet not shabby: they were of a dull drab color, thoroughly creased at all the angles, so that no one but the Professor could have worn them comfortably, nor he have been at ease in any other. His right slipper, as the leg appertaining to it rested across his other shin, showed its down-trodden heel, and the sole curved away from the sole of the foot, revealing the sharp arch of the Professor's instep. His broad but not over-tall form lay back at ease in the leather-covered, hollow-seated chair. The hand that held the pipe was strong and shapely, with hair on the back, and on the back of the lower joint of the knuckles, and growing thick on the wrist, as far up as the shirt-cuff revealed it. A gray beard, clipped close, surmounted the Professor's broad, firm cheeks and leonine chin; high above his big square ears rose his head, its arched summit passing through the tangled and grizzled growth that clung to the sides and back. The Professor's eyes were blue, and expressed humor, penetration and sagacity. He sat facing one side of the fireplace: on the other side was a young man under thirty, who was not smoking, though he was enveloped in the clouds emanating from his older companion. He wore evening-dress,

and had the air of a gentleman conscious of his responsibilities to society and to himself: he was conscientious, correct and conventional. But, on the other hand, he was young; his present limitations might be due more to inherited stupidity and to cramping circumstances than to natural depravity: experience might give him a broader and more human development. He was, in fact, the son of highly respectable and wealthy people; he had received a thorough academic education; he had never committed a social error; he knew and believed all such things as should be matter of belief and knowledge to correct young men — and he knew and believed nothing else. In fact, he was a fool, with the potency of better things in him.

The Professor's name was Brooks. The young gentleman's name was Barr. Professor Brooks had been one of the instructors of Mr. Barr, when the latter was in the undergraduate department of the university, some years since. On Mr. Barr's return from his post-graduate European tour, he had fallen into the habit of often calling on the Professor, whose abode, near the college enclosure, was not more than a few miles from his own residence on the fashionable residence street of the neighboring city. This was the more commendable in him inasmuch as the Professor habitually used him with great freedom and even roughness, and spared not, upon occasion, to cast ridicule and contempt upon all that the Barr kind of people esteem sacred and *comme il faut*. The Professor was a humorist, of the antique type; and he possessed a fearful fascination for Barr, who did not understand him, but was man enough to try to.

It must also be revealed that Barr had fallen deeply in love with Susan Wayne, the Professor's niece, an orphan, living with her uncle in his old-fashioned house. Susan, who was nineteen, and a delightful girl, thought she loved him. But the Professor had hitherto refused to consent to a regular engagement between them.

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"You are not at present, worth a decent girl's acceptance," he said to Barr on the very evening I am writing about. "You are a babe in swaddling clothes. You have never once kicked out a leg on your own independent account. Susan agreed to tolerate you on the theory that you might turn out to be, hereafter, less of a prig and a poke than you appear now. I have yet to be satisfied that she has any grounds for her expectation. I even question your love for her. It is only her pretty outside that has attracted you."

"No, now, really, that's too bad of you, Professor!" Barr exclaimed, a flush appearing on his smooth, comely face. "It isn't her outside a bit. I should care for her just the same, no matter what she looked like. Oh, you know I would! It's her soul, you know, her" —

"Rubbish! What if her soul inhabited the body of a nigger wench?"

Barr shuddered, but said, "It would make no difference, provided, you know, I knew her as I do now. Of course," he added conscientiously, "if her physical part had been that of the sort of person you describe, it isn't likely I should have got into such relations with her, you know" —

"The fact is, you don't know whether you care for her or not; you only think you do. What in heaven's name *do* you know, my dear boy? — really and certainly know, or believe? Do you believe in the Fourth Dimension of Space?"

"Oh, I say!" cried Barr, reproachfully. "That's just a mathematical sort of lark, you know. Nobody believes there is such a thing."

"Don't they? Well, now suppose you had a bit of cord, like those patent window cords, made in an endless loop, all in one piece. You know what I mean, don't you?"

"Just a ring of rope, isn't it? Yes, what about it?"

"Could you tie or knot it, without cutting it?"

"Why, of course I couldn't! Nobody could. You could tie a loop, but it would slip right out again. But a plain knot—that can't be done."

"You positively know and believe that? As certainly as you know you love Susan, and not merely her appearance?"

"Well, they're not exactly the sort of things one compares together, you know; still—yes—I'm as sure of one as I am of the other."

The Professor opened a drawer, and took out of it a small coil of rope, which he handed to Barr; and while the latter was examining it, he knocked the ashes out of his pipe and refilled it from his tobacco-box, sawed out of a joint of Japanese bamboo.

Barr uncoiled the rope, and found it to be precisely such an endless ring as the Professor had described to him. It was made in one piece: the strands were continuous all round, and had no point of junction. The rope was about one-third of an inch in diameter, and perhaps four feet in length. It was new and rather stiff, and in all respects save one, a very commonplace piece of rope.

But in one respect it was extraordinary. A plain knot was loosely tied in it. It was an ordinary knot: but how did it get there?

When Barr recognized the miraculous character of the phenomenon, his mind instinctively leaned to the only commonplace solution possible. "The knot was tied when the rope was made," said he.

"Well, no," replied the Professor. "When I bought that circle of rope, it had no knot in it. I soaked it in a solution of alum, and then gave it into the hands of a certain person. This person gathered it up

in a sort of ball, and held it in her hands for a moment. Then she shook it out again, and the knot was there, as you see it now. I applied the chemical test for alum, and obtained the reaction. This, you understand, was in order to guard against the possibility of substitution. The alum, as you see, leaves no visible traces on the rope. You also see the knot."

Yes, Barr saw the knot. He pulled it open, passed his hand through it, pulled it together again. It was a positive, ordinary, undeniable knot. He looked up at the Professor in helpless bewilderment.

"That knot, you perceive," the latter remarked, "could not have been tied there by any means known practically to you or me. In order to tie it, it was necessary to make a movement in the Fourth Dimension. We can understand the theory, and we can recognize the result; the only thing we can't do is to follow the movement. But you were saying a moment ago, that you don't believe in the Fourth Dimension. On the other hand, you did believe that you loved Susan Wayne. What do you believe now?"

Barr was silent for a while, and then said, "There may be a Fourth Dimension, Professor; but I should love Susan just the same if there were no dimensions at all."

"We'll see about that!" returned the other.

"Did you ever happen to hear it suggested," asked the Professor after a pause, during which he had kept his eyes steadfastly fixed upon Barr's ingenuous countenance, "that if this planet (and of course the rest of the natural universe with it) were to change its dimensions all at once—say, from its present size to that of an orange, or *vice versa*, not a soul of us who inhabit it could ever be aware of the alteration? Physical size being strictly relative, you know, there is no means of determining the size of anything except by comparing it with a given standard."

"I think I understand what you mean," said Barr. "Yes, of course, if everything changes to the same scale, we wouldn't any of us know it. It would all seem just the same as it was before."

"Exactly; unless, by the way, you should happen to get switched outside of the universe at the instant of the change, and not get back till after it was over. But I was about to say—would you be surprised to hear that the phenomenon in question is not a mere hypothesis, but an actual fact; and that it takes place once every four-and-twenty hours, with the regularity of the motion of a pendulum. Assuming, then, that you are six feet high to-day, you will be (by to-day's standard, mind you!) only six inches high to-morrow; and it is only because the foot-rule shrinks with you, that you are not aware of it."

"If you say it is so, Professor, I won't say it can't be so; after seeing

that knot, I can believe pretty nearly anything — except that anything will alter my feeling for Susan, you know.”

“Speaking of Susan, she may be of use to us in the matter,” the Professor remarked. He rang the bell, and told the servant to request Miss Wayne to come to the study.

During the interval that elapsed before Susan's appearance, the Professor talked quietly to Barr, who sat motionless in his chair, his gaze directed upon the polished ivory cupola surmounting the miniature Chinese pagoda on the mantel-piece; which, as he contemplated it, seemed alternately to diminish and to expand in size, now appearing large enough to cover an acre of ground, and now just big enough to contain a manikin of the length of one's hand. Indeed, he now saw a Mongolian countenance peeping out of one of the windows; and it occurred to him that, if the world really did swell and shrink as the Professor had suggested, this Chinaman must, in a certain way, be alive.

“Assuming that the Fourth Dimension exists,” the Professor was saying, “and that a knot, otherwise impossible can be tied in it, it follows that you or I may also avail ourselves of its facilities. Matter, philosophically speaking, is only a temporary mode of sensation. If the mind can be convinced that translation into this Dimension be practicable, it is obvious that it would carry the body with it. There are states of trance in which the mind seems absolutely to command the physical part, and it is in this direction that we should look for results. Now, Susan, as you know, has powers as a sensitive, and it was she, in fact, who was the agent in the production of that knot. She offers, therefore, a promising field for experiment.”

At this juncture, Susan opened the door and came in. She was dressed in the same toilette of soft cream-colored *crépe* that she had worn at dinner. She had the loveliness and fragrance of a damask rose, and no one who looked at her could have blamed Barr for believing that nothing could alter his devotion to her.

“Mercy, uncle, what a lot of tobacco-smoke!” she cried out.

“Susan,” said the Professor gravely, “I have called you to assist me in the conversion of a sceptic. You are to help me demonstrate to him the limitations of credulity and the extent of knowledge. He has seen the knot: but we must go a step farther to complete his enlightenment. The man who marries you must learn how to free his mind from prejudice, and to distrust the stability of his own prepossessions. You will, if you please, move into the Fourth Dimension.”

Susan, through the blue vapor of the tobacco-smoke, cast one quick glance at Barr. There was something in the look that spoke of compassion for him and of a misgiving — whether on his account or hers he

could not decide. The next moment she averted her eyes and stood erect, like a charming statue cunningly wrought in ivory. The light from the lamp fell full upon her. She stood in the broad open space between the table and the door, at the intersection of two bands of red and yellow in the pattern of the rug.

"Now, Barr, pay close attention," said the Professor: and he went on, accompanying the word by the action. "She stands there, you see, at the meeting of the ways — the point of no dimension. First, by the motion of my right hand, I induce the trance. Next, by this slow up-and-down motion, I bring her to the interior respiration, which is attainable by only a very few sensitives, and which is indispensable to what follows. It is hardly perceptible, you observe; but it is the master-key between mind and matter. Combined with the proper symbolic movements of the body and applications of the thought, it evaporates flesh and blood as the heat of the sun drinks water. Now I beckon her to come forward in the first direction — the linear. She is now living the life of linear extension alone; she is unconscious of anything except as it lies in the direction and on the plane of that mode of existence. Now, I wave her to the left: she is now living in the surface, or plane: the life of two dimensions. To reach the third, or that in which our own universe exists, it is only necessary to traverse the diagonal of the last two movements, answering to the ascending movement. And now, having passed through all the preliminary stages in their logical succession, she is ready to take the final step, which will, of course, remove her from our field of vision."

"Remove her from our field of vision?"

"You will see for yourself. It is now within half a minute of nine o'clock," said the Professor, consulting his watch. "While the clock in the corner there is striking the hour, the translation will take place. I wish you to scrutinize the phenomenon as closely as possible, so as to catch, if you can, the direction of the movement that carries her out of our sphere. Ah! there goes the clock. You may rise if you like, and go up to her."

Barr, feeling strangely perplexed, as if he were on the threshold of an unknown world, got to his feet and made one or two paces in the direction of the spot where Susan was standing. Meanwhile the clock was striking, slowly, but with a peculiarly penetrating and vibrating tone. These vibrations seemed to be sympathetically reflected in Susan's body. She shivered — wavered — and at each successive stroke a certain indistinctness drifted over her, as if the wreaths of blue tobacco-smoke were dissolving her into their own vaporous substance. But just as the ninth stroke was about to sound, and Barr, peering through the smoke clouds, had assured himself that Susan was still

there, as solid and sweet as ever—in that instant she vanished like the sudden extinction of a soap-bubble. She had retired into the Fourth Dimension!

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“It so happens,” the Professor was saying, when Barr began to recover a little from the dizziness and stupefaction caused by this catastrophe, “that the time of Susan’s disappearance—she is, of course, still here with us, and can see us, though to us invisible—is synchronous with that shrinkage of the universe of which we were speaking a few minutes ago. But, since she has, as it were, stepped outside of the ordinary spatial universe, she is not subject to the change in size which has affected everything else. I will now recall her from the region in which she is secluded, and she will afford a sensible demonstration of the theory I outlined to you.”

Nothing was more extraordinary in all this than the matter-of-fact, monotonous fluency of the Professor’s speech. It was not like his ordinary conversational manner: it recalled to Barr the learned gentleman’s harangues to the class in the lecture-room, in the old days. A curious sense of unreality pervaded the whole transaction. Probably the mind takes refuge in a species of paralysis of credulity, when confronted with miracle. The violence done to probability and experience by Susan’s disappearance had thrown the machinery of Barr’s intellect out of gear, so that the whole affair affected him like a dream. No dream so fantastic and preposterous, however, had ever found its way into Barr’s honest and unimaginative brain.

The Professor had again been making some passes with his hands: he now stooped for a moment, and seemed to take something off the floor. He then stepped to the mantelpiece, where stood the Chinese pagoda. He muttered a few words, the purport of which Barr did not catch, and finally returned to his chair, composedly resuming his pipe.

“But where is Susan?” faltered the young man.

“Susan is all right. I have just spoken with her. She has returned to the Third Dimension, and you will see her in a moment. But she wished me to prepare you beforehand for the meeting. She fears you might otherwise receive a shock which”—

“Good heavens, Professor! Has she met with an accident?”

“No, no: sit down. I tell you she’s all right. Besides, as I explained to her, you have repeatedly declared that no merely physical modifications could alter in the least your feelings for her. You still adhere to that declaration, I presume?”

“Of course I do! But how—where is she? Has anything”—

“My dear boy, she is in this room. She is perfectly well. She is the same Susan, to a hair, that she was ten minutes ago.”

"But if she's in this room, why don't I see her?"

"Simply because she is concealing herself, for the moment, behind (or I shall say, within) an article of furniture: I will point it out to you directly. But first I must ask you to remember that, since you saw Susan, the universe has, as I warned you it was about to do, undergone a material change in dimensions. But inasmuch as Susan chanced at that moment not to be in the universe, she did not participate in this change. In other words, she is now actually of the same stature that she was when she first entered this room: whereas you and I, and everything else, have very largely increased. Do you understand me?"

"Professor Brooks, what has happened?" said Barr, turning very pale, and directing a horror-stricken gaze at the other. "I am actually afraid to think of what you may mean? Tell me at once—I can't bear this suspense another moment!"

"Keep calm, my dear Barr: be reasonable. Nothing is altered, except the unit of measurement; and love being, as you say, a matter of souls, in no way dependent on spatial considerations, you need feel no uneasiness. Susan has hitherto appeared to be about the height of your ear—I mean, of course, about the height above the ground that your ear is: she now appears to be about the size of her figure in that cabinet photograph she gave you the other day. That's all, positively—not really worth mentioning. Go to her, and reassure her. You'll find her in the Chinese pagoda on the mantelpiece."

"Susan in the Chinese pagoda!"

The intensity and confusion of Barr's feelings blurred his faculties: everything seemed like a dream. He seemed to himself to stand apart, and to watch curiously his own actions, and the incredible things that happened. He saw himself walk up to the mantelpiece, and look at the pagoda. His eyes were attracted towards the window at which he had seen the face of the ivory Chinaman: a face was still there, but it was not of a Mongolian caste; it was Anglo-Saxon; it was American; it was feminine; yes, it was the living face of a beautiful, little young lady, whose features had, for many months past, been stamped on Barr's heart. The tiny, sparkling eyes of this fairy countenance met his own stupefied gaze: the face disappeared from the window—in another moment a lilliputian maiden was standing in the pagoda doorway. She was dressed in cream-colored *crêpe*, of texture finer than cobweb; her hair was like a wreath of dark mist on her graceful head; her white hands were microscopic marvels a third of an inch in length, and the inconceivable satin slippers on her feet could have been boxed up in a hickory nutshell. The doorway in which she stood was barely six inches in height, and the top of this little creature's head fell short of the lintel by half an inch.

"Put me on the table, please!" she said, holding out her arms; and the voice, though minute as the rest of her, was still the soft, clear, unmistakable voice that had never failed to make Barr's pulses throb — the voice of Susan Wayne! Did it make his pulses throb now? Doubtless it did, and with a poignant emotion, too. But it was an emotion of consternation, of anguish, of horror, of repulsion; whatever it was, it was no longer love.

Susan was sitting swinging her feet over the edge of the dictionary, on which she had climbed by way of the paper-weight. She looked flushed, and had apparently been crying. Barr sat in a low easy-chair, his cheeks pale, his hair disordered, his eyes fixed and glaring, his shirt-front rumpled, his hands in his trousers pockets. He was a portrait of Despair, in evening-dress. The Professor, with his pipe, was as self-possessed as usual. For half an hour or more he had been sustaining an active argument with Barr, and had defeated him on every point. He had proved to him that he had not a rational leg to stand on, and moreover that he had involved himself in hopeless self-contradictions.

"If you were an avowed materialist," he was saying, "if you denied the existence of the soul, or of anything that was not physically cognizable, I could make some allowances for your present attitude. You had contracted for a piece of female goods weighing one hundred and twenty pounds, and you would naturally object to something weighing scarcely as many drachms. But for a man, whose professions are so spiritual as yours, you are incomprehensible. You would not, I suppose, cease to love Susan if she stood at a distance of forty paces from you; and yet, at that distance, she would appear just the size she does now. Her nature, her character, her temperament, her memory, are the same now that they were at dinner-time; she even retains the same sentiments towards you that she then had. You find nothing revolting in her portrait, which is just life-size (as she is now), and yet I'll leave it to any one if she isn't infinitely prettier and more precious than any possible portrait. What is it about her, I beg to ask, that you loved? Was it her pounds avoirdupois, or her superficies in square feet and inches? — for, upon my word, if it wasn't that, I should like you to inform me what in the name of mystery it was!"

"I can't explain myself, or justify myself, Professor," replied the unhappy young man, in husky tones. "Nobody ever had anything like this happen to him before. I love Susan just the same as ever I did, of course; but I can't love that little creature that is sitting on the dictionary there — it's ridiculous! I don't know how or why; but it's against nature. I suppose she has got the same soul she had, and so have I; but, as long as we live in this world, the soul is not everything.

We're not made on the same scale: and that separates us. You say she looks as she would forty yards off: well, then, that's the distance we are apart; and we can never get nearer. You may call it absurd, and so it is, I suppose; but there must be a meaning in it, somehow: if there was no reason for my feeling as I do, I shouldn't feel so! If she and I were souls and nothing else, I'm sure we should be of the same size, or what answers to the same size, with spirits. Now, it is something as if one of us were dead, or living on another planet. We can't come near each other: we can't be anything to each other; and so, we can't love each other. Besides, it can't be true that she is the same as she was before. Such a difference in the size of her body can't have taken place without a corresponding change in her mind and soul. I can't prove it, but I feel that it must be so. I can love her picture, because I know that it is only a representation of something real, which it's right for me to love; but I can't love that little creature there, because she doesn't represent herself—she *is* herself, and that's all she ever can be!”

“Upon my word, Barr, you have a very uncereemonious way of speaking of ‘that little creature’!” remarked the Professor. “I must request you to remember that she is Miss Susan Wayne, and my niece. Whatever your sentiments towards her may be, she is just as dear to me as she ever was, and I insist upon her being treated with respect. Susan, my dear,” he added, “what have you to say on this subject? Are you convinced that Mr. Barr is not worthy your regard?”

“I think, uncle,” replied Susan, with spirit, “that he has said what is just right, and just what I should have said in his place. And I don't think your experiment is fair, and I wish you would stop it. No man, who is a man, could pretend to care for such a little midget as you have made me appear to him. I love him better than ever, and I wish you'd please make everything as it was before. If you don't, I'll never forgive you!”

The Professor chuckled in his beard, and laid down his pipe. “Well, Barr,” he said, “since she pleads for you, I'll treat you better than you deserve. But let this be a lesson to you. Don't allow yourself to imagine that finite and mortal man can safely assert that even the strongest inclinations of his nature are unalterable and everlasting. Believe, rather, that we are a very frail and uncertain lot of creatures, who know neither one another nor our own selves. The man who plunges into matrimony with the idea that the mere ardor of his passion is going to keep him faithful through life, is arrogating more to the strength of human constancy than our mortal limitations warrant. It will be more prudent and more reverential to pray every morning for virtue and manhood enough to carry you through the next four-and-twenty hours. The

Fourth Dimension in Space may be a mere mathematical fancy, and the periodical shrinking and expansion of the universe only a freak of imagination; but there are plenty of things to be met with in life that will test your strength and fidelity quite as severely. And from those trials and disappointments there will be no such easy deliverance as I am able — luckily for you — to give you now!”

So saying, the Professor clapped his hands smartly, and, taking his handkerchief from his pocket, waved it thrice before Barr's eyes.

These apparently inconsequent demonstrations were followed by a singular result. Barr had a sensation as if all the nerves of his skin were subjected to a current of icy air, while the sight of his eyes grew dark and indistinct, and then cleared slowly; and the first object his gaze rested upon was Susan, a lilliputian no longer, but of the normal stature of women of this planet, and looking in all respects more lovely and lovable than ever. Nor was she any longer sitting on the dictionary. She was standing on the floor, and was regarding him with a shy and wistful expression, which fetched his heart right up into his throat.

“Susan!” he cried. “Has it been a dream? Thank God you are yourself!”

“It has been quite a successful experiment in hypnotic suggestion,” said the Professor. “You are a good subject, Barr; though perhaps you hardly do yourself justice as a philosophical and ethical controversialist. You were only in the lighter stage — possibly the deeper condition might develop further mental powers in you, though it could hardly render you more susceptible to hints from the experimenter.”

Barr signalized his return to his own independent mind by conceiving and carrying out on the spot a notable bit of strategy. He stepped quickly up to Susan, put his arms round her, and kissed her with all the vigor and emphasis that a long and painful separation could justify.

“I may be an ass,” he said to the Professor over his shoulder, while still retaining the blushing Susan in his embrace, “but I am sensible enough to know that nothing can ever again make me say I don't love Susan; and I won't let go of her until you agree to let me marry her next month.”

“I leave it to Susan,” replied the Professor.

Susan hid her face on Barr's shoulder.

“Then I leave Susan to you,” added the old gentleman, with a sigh. “But,” he added, “don't forget that marriage brings about changes and miracles greater than any you have seen to-night. And should either of you become a lilliput hereafter, I'll venture to prophesy it won't be the wife!”

JACK-AT-A-PINCH.

By E. B. Perkins.

MRS. PARKER'S dinners were always successful. She had the happy faculty of getting together congenial people, having her dinner well cooked and well served, and entertaining her guests as though she were herself a guest; moreover, she never showed anxiety or restlessness, a faculty still to be learned by nine-tenths of all hostesses. It seemed as though kind Fortune helped her.

But "it is a long lane that has no turning." At last one of Mrs. Parker's dinners took a very disastrous turn, which, with one blow, would have destroyed her long-standing and enviable reputation, had not one of the guests saved it from utter failure.

As it is the unexpected that always happens, so it was the uninteresting man who interested all the table on that unlucky night.

Mrs. Parker was giving a dinner of ten. On her right sat a young society-man, and next him a charming girl, but, unfortunately, these two were not on speaking terms—a fact of which the hostess was in ignorance. Next the pretty girl sat a young lawyer, desperately in love with the *débutante* at his other side, but the *débutante* was so frightened by her first dinner-party, that to neither the lawyer on her left, nor her host on her right, could she volunteer a remark.

On the other side of the table sat a charming colonel, with numberless anecdotes and reminiscences of the war, a young widow—his special friend,—a nervous little married woman, and a Dr. Beekman, a cousin of Mrs. Parker.

Dr. Beekman had been asked in to "fill up," on twenty-four hours' notice, for the nervous woman's husband had been called away on business, and the Parkers had not felt at liberty to ask any one but a member of the family to come in at the eleventh hour.

Dr. Beekman was not a favorite relative. He was unprepossessing in appearance; he rarely spoke, except to answer in monosyllables; and when being addressed, his mind seemed to wander and he had a *distracted* air.

His special friends said he was clever, and would make a name for himself in his profession; but even his most intimate friend never

claimed he would ever be a society-man, nor even a dinner-man. It was with misgiving that Mrs. Parker asked him to dine, but, in her usual philosophical way, she said :

“Never mind, one quiet person can’t spoil nine bright ones.”

This was, however, but the beginning of her trials. When dinner was served, the soup was cold; the *entrée* was burned, and the claret proved to be many degrees colder than the temperature of the room.

It was not until this third catastrophe was discovered that Mrs. Parker began to feel anxious. Then she saw that the spirits of the usually talkative colonel were being noticeably affected by the failure of the dinner. The society-girl and society-man were most uncomfortable, the *débutante* had her eyes glued to her plate, and looked frightened to death when the lawyer addressed her. The nervous woman was fidgeting on her chair, playing with her fork, or rolling bread between her fingers, and occasionally giving a nervous laugh at some commonplace remark. The truth was, her slippers were tight, but Mrs. Parker didn’t know that, and attributed her uneasiness to some mismanagement of her own.

Dr. Beekman was, as she expected he would be, quiet. True to his reputation, there he sat with a preoccupied expression on his face, and the widow who sat between him and the colonel, had given up in despair trying to elicit a remark from either, and had, herself, relapsed into silence.

Mrs. Parker gave one glance at her husband. They both turned to their right-hand neighbors and made desperate efforts to arouse animation, but, alas! the dinner was on the downward track, and it was too late to be saved by such feeble efforts.

One good story-teller could have saved it, and Mrs. Parker glanced at the colonel. If he would only make an effort! He was the one man equal to the situation; but no, he was disappointed and cross, and would make no attempt at conversation.

The game was being served. Mrs. Parker became conscious that the butler’s boots squeaked, and that the maid in the pantry was clattering the knives and forks. A dead silence reigned at the table, when she heard Dr. Beekman say to the widow :

“So you don’t believe in ghosts! Well, I didn’t, either, till I had an experience of my own.”

He glanced around the table, and seeing all eyes were upon him, raised a champagne-glass to his lips, while the society-girl and the hostess exclaimed in one breath :

“Do tell us what it was!”

He put down the wine-glass and told the following story.

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"Some six or seven years ago my sister and I wished to live in the country, near enough to town for me to have an office in the city and still go home every night. After looking about some time for houses, we finally found one at Wayside, a much larger one than we expected for a merely nominal rent.

"The place had quite large grounds, with a gardener's house at the entrance. After having had the plumbing examined, and the house well looked over, expecting to find some flaw to account for the marvellously low price, yet finding none, we moved in, charmed with our new quarters.

"It was not many days before some kind neighbors told us the reason the house was rented for so small a sum. It was haunted. No one ever lived there more than two months; the servants seldom stayed beyond two weeks.

"We laughed at the story, and said we thought the ghost added interest to the house. We would stay three months anyway, for we had paid that much rent in advance.

"It was about four days later when my sister came to me with a sorrowful face, and said the waitress had given warning. She gave no reason (sensible girl), except that she didn't like the place. We got another waitress in a day or two, but by that time the laundress had taken her departure, saying she heard noises and steps, and it was uncanny. We were both much put out by this trouble with servants, and thought, of course, they had heard the rumors from the neighbors' servants.

"Imagine our indignation when all three domestics came at once and gave notice of their immediate departure, wages or no wages, as we liked, but they wouldn't stay another night. It was in the fall, and hard to get others to take their places, so for a few days we were without any.

"One day, on my return from town, my sister said in rather a laughing way, though I detected an undertone of uneasiness in her voice: 'I thought, James, you had come home early this afternoon, for as I was sewing in the sitting-room I heard your steps in the lower hall, and as you came up the stairs I called out to you; but getting no reply and still hearing your steps, I went to the door. There was no one in the hall. At first, I thought it might be burglars, but I went all over the house and found no one.'

"I replied that she was tired from the housework, and probably nervous; that if she had heard anything, it was likely a cat, or the wind, or one of fifty explanations. But the next Sunday, when my sister had gone to church, and I was comfortably reading the newspaper at home, my solitude was disturbed by the sound of some one in the lower hall.

"I wondered if my sister had returned from church. She had only been gone about three-quarters of an hour, and I listened to see if she was coming upstairs. Yes, the steps came nearer, and I called out, 'Eleanor, what are you home so soon for?'

"Getting no reply, I went to the door of the sitting-room. I still heard the steps on the stairway, so I spoke again. Again I got no answer, but the steps still advanced, walked down the upper hall, passed directly in front of where I was standing and then stopped.

"I returned to my morning paper, and read, I must confess, the same column for an hour without knowing what it was about. However, I had made up my mind to one thing: I wouldn't speak to my sister about it.

"At luncheon she thought it strange I couldn't tell her the news of the morning, and incidentally remarked, 'You should have been in church this morning. We had a delightful sermon. It was very long; but so interesting! I could have listened half-an-hour longer.'

"That proved to me that she hadn't left church early.

"During the week that followed, while I was still pondering over my strange experience, and my sister was trying to get settled with three new servants, she came to me again one evening on my return from town, and said:

"James, the new servants are dissatisfied. They haven't been here three days, but they can't stand it any longer — and what's more, I can't, either, James. We must move. I haven't said anything more to you about the noises, for I knew you would only laugh at me, but really I've heard those steps very often, and I'm getting nervous. I'm sorry to lose all the rent we've paid in advance, but we must change our quarters.'

"I then told her my experience of the previous Sunday. The consequence was we left the house the next day and moved in next door, to a much smaller house, with a much larger rent, but unoccupied by anybody but ourselves.

"We had a severe winter that year, and the snow was part of the time very deep. We had been in our new house about three months (the haunted house still stood empty), when one night, about two o'clock, my sister came to my room and woke me, saying, 'James, there is some one knocking at the front-door. You had better go down and see who it is.' So I slipped on some clothes and went down stairs, where, sure enough, I found a man who said his wife was very ill, and would I come to see her. I said 'Certainly,' and asked where he lived.

"Just next door to you,' he replied, and pointed towards the haunted house.

"I must confess I was surprised, but asked no questions; only requested him to come in while I went upstairs for my overcoat.

My sister asked who wanted me at that hour of the night, and I told her a patient in the haunted house.

“‘But,’ she exclaimed, ‘it isn’t occupied; unless the people moved in to-day.’

“‘Very likely,’ I replied, and hurried down stairs. The man was waiting for me, and we went out of the house together.

“It was moonlight, and the snow had ceased falling. Everything was quiet and peaceful, and the only light to be seen in any window was from an upper one of the haunted house. I noticed it came from a room that we had never used.

“We went in at the gate, passed the gardener’s lodge, where all was still and where the same gardener had lived for a number of years, up the path to the front-door.

“The man went ahead of me and pushed open the door. How different it looked! Evidently the new comers had only just moved in, for there was no carpet on the floor, the stairs were very dusty, and I noticed the rooms looked bare.

“We passed upstairs, and turned to the left and entered a scantily furnished bedroom.

“There, on an old-fashioned, canopied bed, lay a pretty woman, but looking, oh, so ill!

“I saw she was in the last stages of consumption, and no doctor on earth could cure her; but I wrote a prescription which might give her some relief, and, handing it to the man, told him to have it put up the first thing in the morning, and that about nine o’clock I’d call again to see if it had relieved her suffering. Then I bade him ‘good-night.’

“He took the prescription and laid it on the corner of the mantel-piece, then shading the candle from the draughts that threatened to blow it out, he lighted me to the stairs, and I immediately passed out of the house and came home.

“I found my sister still sitting up for me, her curiosity much roused about her new neighbors, and I told her all that had happened.

“The next morning at breakfast I said I should stop on my way to the ferry and see how my new patient was doing. As I left the house I saw the print of our feet in the snow, which had remained since my midnight excursion, and as I turned in at the gate, I saw the old gardener standing at his door.

“He seemed a trifle surprised to see me walking in that direction, so I stopped and said to him:

“‘Good-morning, Mike, how is the sick lady this morning?’

“‘What sick lady, sir?’ he replied.

“‘Why, the lady in the house, of course,’ I said, pointing that way.

“‘There ain’t no lady there, sir. No one has ever been in that house since you and your sister moved out more’n three months ago.’

“‘Why, Mike!’ said I. ‘Surely no one could move in without your knowing it, and yet I was there last night to attend a sick lady.’

“‘No, sir; no one could move in unless I knew it, for I have the keys, and they haven’t been out of my possession.’

“‘Come, Mike,’ said I, getting impatient, ‘don’t fool any more, but come up to the house with me, and I’ll show you the people that live there, and prove to you that I was there last night. No need to take the keys,’ I continued, as I saw him take one from the shelf and put it in his pocket. But he merely smiled, and followed me up the path.

“I showed him the footprints of the night before, which seemed to puzzle him somewhat; but when we reached the front-door and there was no sign of life about, and when it took his key to turn the lock, it was my turn to look puzzled.

“We entered the house, and I called softly, but had no reply. Everything looked as it did the night before; the same carpetless floors and dusty stairs; and there on the balusters were our finger-marks!

“I mounted the stairs, Mike following me, and knocked at the door of the room I had entered the night before, but getting no response, I opened it softly, and to my utter surprise found it absolutely empty.

“No bed, no chairs, the blinds tightly closed — only a few rays of light coming in through the cracks!

“To tell the truth I felt very awkward and embarrassed, and thinking how vivid a dream can be, I turned to Mike and told him all I thought had happened. He nodded his head in a self-satisfied sort of way, as much as to say, ‘I knew all along it was imagination,’ when suddenly his eyes caught sight of something which changed the expression of his face, and I turned to see what had so startled him.

“For a moment I was more frightened than surprised, for I had by this time thoroughly convinced myself I was dreaming the night before; but now all my theories were dispelled, merely by the sight of a bit of paper.

“It was my prescription lying on the mantel-piece!

“We neither of us spoke. I took the bit of paper, and we walked out of the room, and out of the house.

“Mike carefully locked the door behind him. As we returned to the lodge he remarked, ‘Well, sir, I won’t dispute your having been in that house last night, but how you got in, and who the people were, I don’t know.’

“I returned to my house, and before I got inside my door my sister called out, ‘How is the sick lady, James?’

“I came in and said, ‘Eleanor, tell me everything that happened last

night, and I'll tell you the sequel.' She then repeated what I've told you, and I reported my visit with Mike.

"We never spoke of this to our neighbors, and that spring we moved into the city again."

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Dr. Beekman finished, and a slight shudder passed around the table.

The last course had been served, and the hostess gave the signal for rising, amidst a few hurried exclamations from the guests, and the ladies passed into the drawing-room.

The ladies in the drawing-room discussed the story; and the men over their cigars asked a few questions, but Dr. Beekman volunteered no more information and relapsed into his former silence. When the men joined the ladies other topics were discussed, and the guests soon took their departure.

Dr. Beekman was the last to leave. As he rose to go, Mrs. Parker said:

"Why, James, I never knew you had had so interesting an experience. Why did you never tell me before that this had happened to you?"

"It never did happen," he replied, "but I had to save your dinner."

AN ELECTRICAL CASE.

By Charles McIlvaine.

FROM the time I could bandage a broken kite-stick, prick a blister, or take huge doses of camomile tea heroically, my natural bent was toward medicine as a profession. The very saddle-pockets of the old family physician (which I verily believed brought babies now and then to the house) had a fascination for me; and the colorless streak, striping his drab waistcoat on the cork-line of his be-bottled pockets, were ornaments I hoped some day to attain. The kindly old gentleman himself must have noticed my early fitness for his calling; probably from the length of tongue I gave him to examine, when called upon to stick that member out; for when he died he left me his broken-backed one-bladed knife, the point of which had been his medicine measure and scales for two-score years and ten. It is, therefore, not remarkable that, at the age of twenty-five I should find myself the owner of a square yard of latin, beginning, "*Omnibus ad quos Prætentis Literæ pervenerint, Salutum,*" and ending in, "*cujus rei Testimonium.*" All of which meant that I, Gatchell Minor, won it at the University of Pennsylvania, and was thereby certified to be a "*Doctorum in arte Medica.*"

These are the days of specialists. One by one the grosser branches of medical science were eliminated from my ambition, as I prepared myself for my profession until there was nothing left but the brain, with its trail of nerves — like a mysterious comet with its tail — for my specialty.

Two years of attentive work in an insane-asylum, gave me experience, and heightened my interest in the subtle, invidious, concealed causes which cloud so many minds and make cranks of most of us; "*For all the world is queer, save thee and me, and thou art a little queer.*" In the full vigor of manhood, with my speciality well studied, with conceit bred of success, I felt able to cope with any case of disordered intellect. But I met my match, and this is how.

I was offered and accepted the position of resident physician in a celebrated asylum for the treatment of nervous and mental disorders, where but few patients were admitted, and those only that wealth paid for, and for whom every tie of either love or interest demanded a cure.

The building was massive in its respectability, cheerful in its solemnity,

and flashed away the shimmer of a land-locked pool, wherever guarding oaks would let it. It stood in the suburbs of a suburban town, having spacious yards for lungs, with air from sea and pine to breathe.

One early spring morning, when the oak buds were taking their first and only blush for the year 1890, mayhap for waking later than those of beech and hickory, a cab rumbled along the drive, stopped at the columnal entrance to the house, and two women got out. From where I stood at the pool-side, smoking, I could see that they were cultured. As the carriage was between us I had only their feet and a glimpse of shoe-tops to diagnose from; but the dainty touch of their toes to the carriage-stone upon which they alighted, told me that much. There is a better key to a woman's character in her feet than in her hands.

The absence of the manager placed me in charge of the establishment. I therefore hurried to receive and admit the new-comers. I knew they were strangers by the positions of their feet after they turned to speak to the driver: had they not seen the beauty of the lake for the first time, the turn of them would not have been so suddenly arrested, and each pair of feet would have been closer and more naturally together. "Both young. Twin as spars," I said to myself. "Thoroughbreds. The right-hand one the less impulsive; left-hand one — corns."

Such figures and faces, revealed as the carriage drew away like a black slide from between us, I had never seen. In height, lines, grace, youth, their persons were alike. One face was dazzling, fresh, mobile, and dancing as the rippled pond at which her dark eyes gazed; the other, clear, placid, rosy as the pool when the morning sunlight sought it free from stir. Their features were as twins; but the wavy, peeping, curly hair of one, was older by forty years than the other, and told its age in Time's softest blending of brown and gray.

"Visitors," I mentally decided as I approached them with head bowed involuntarily in homage to such comely presence. Introducing myself, I asked in what way I could render them service. I confess that a wish coupled with hope rose within me, that I might be requested to lock both of them up, that beings so beautiful might not get away.

"Doctor," quickly replied the younger of the two, with a nervous hurry in her voice, "this is my aunt, Miss Rebecca Longshore; and I am Miss Floyd Barton. To please me, auntie [I would in days long afterward have given my prized diploma for the smile, and glance, and look of love, she turned upon her companion as she spoke] has consented to place herself under your care for a while. We have heard of your skill and success in — [She hesitated, as if fearing to use the wrong words, and showed a touch of fright] — in removing annoyances which persons are sometimes unable to remove themselves. Auntie has been very much annoyed lately."

"Floy, dear," interrupted her aunt, laying her hand remonstratingly upon her arm, "you must tell the doctor of yourself. It is to please and help you that I am come."

"Great heavens!" I inwardly ejaculated. "Were there ever before two such sweet and sane-looking lunatics?"

"I will tell him all about myself," responded her niece, "but of you, first. Let us sit here upon the porch; this view is so deliciously refreshing. Look at the lake. See how clearly that hill is reflected down among the clouds. It reminds me of the delightful imagery of Hogg:

'O'er mountains inverted the blue waters curled,
And rocked them in clouds of a far nether world.'

Let us sit here while you tell the doctor of your afflictions."

"It is a scene of rare beauty, dear," replied Miss Longshore absently. Her face flushed slightly, and she moved uneasily upon her feet. "But let us go on to the porch. There are electric currents here — coming up from the ground. I feel them. Oh, this horrible electricity! everywhere! everywhere! I so hoped there was a spot where I could be free from it. I will soon be completely charged. I feel it up to my knees. There is an electric wire stretched among the trees. I knew that there was one somewhere near." She spoke excitedly, and pointed to a wire running past the house. "Are there electric-light works in the town, doctor?"

Miss Barton looked at me appealingly. Her beautiful eyes were dimmed with distress. I could not catch from them the meaning of her look, or what she wanted me to say. To gain time for halted thought, I said, "Come on to the porch, ladies."

As I placed the chairs, and seated them where the view was best, one of those prompting ideas, coming from no one knows where, but seemingly ready when emergency calls for deception, popped into my head. I saw that the roused lady was the victim of an hallucination. The flush of her face and growing lines of terror, showed that her self-created situations were as real to her as actuality to saner minds. My sympathies, my professional readiness, were rallying allies; so the visiting idea grew and developed into an ingenious lie of huge proportions, as I answered her question.

"Yes, there is an electric plant in the town, a very fine one. It was discovered some time ago that this immediate section of the country, about two miles in diameter, was extraordinarily charged with electricity; and many persons, like yourself, subject and sensitive to electric currents, suffered greatly from them. Some of the most distinguished electricians of the country visited here to study the curious and exceptional condition. After an exhaustive examination, they advised that a

powerful electric plant be established. This was done under their supervision. You know that the dynamos, with which all electric plants are equipped, draw the electricity from the ground, and it is distributed from them. Wires were carried out into the country, several miles from here — that is one of them you see — so that now all the electricity is hoisted out of the ground by the dynamos, and conveyed far out of the town to a stream of water flowing into the ocean, where it is, as it were, dumped. The plan worked like a spell. There is not a trace of electricity anywhere about here; and all of those who suffered from its presence before, are now rejoicing in their release."

I was intently watching the effect of my invention upon Miss Longshore; but that unseen third eye of ours, which does a good deal of independent exploring, was visiting the expressive face of Miss Barton. Her eyes were fixed intently upon me as I spoke. First, interest, then indignation, then disgust, displayed signals in them. I tingled under the gaze as though I, too, was subject to currents. I was conscious that she knew I was deceiving her aunt, and judged me accordingly. But the virus of my profession was mastering me. Hallucinations cannot be banished by argument or appeal to reason. The mind that breeds them is capable only of fostering them. It cannot pass judgment upon its own ailments. Such vagaries must be dispersed, jointly, by treatment of the physical cause, and substituting a confidence in delusions as unreal as the delusions themselves. The virus, I say, was mastering me, therefore, no protest or opinion of my fair critic could swerve me from course or duty; the end must justify the means.

"How exceedingly ingenious," Miss Longshore remarked, as I paused, waiting for a spoken opinion. "But," she continued, "it is not from the earth, alone, that I am annoyed; I feel a current flowing from that wire yonder. It enters at the top of my head, and circles round and round, as if winding itself on a bobbin. Oh, so tight! until I feel as if there was a glowing knob trying to push its way out. I often press it, hoping it will ring a bell in me somewhere, and be discharged."

"I think you must be mistaken about a flow coming from the wire," I ventured. "Because during the daytime the dynamos are not in operation; there is, therefore, no current passing along it."

"Ah!" she exclaimed, quickly, "that is why I feel the currents coming from the ground. The electricity is collecting in the earth under me while the machinery is stopped."

"Perhaps," I assented, "you are as delicately sensitive as an electrometer. If you continue to feel the ground-currents through the day, you can be insulated. By putting rubber soles on your shoes, you will be completely cut off from all electrical contact until I am able to so prepare your system that you will be a perfect non-conductor."

"Oh, thank you! It is strange that I never thought of that simple remedy. Can you do that?" she asked, joyously. "Can you make a non-conductor of me?"

"I do not doubt it," I answered, impressively. (Miss Barton threw herself back in her chair, clasped her hands in her lap, and tapped the floor ominously with her foot. There was a storm brewing evidently. I felt, by induction, the presence of feminine lightning.) "This can be accomplished by a regular diet carefully prepared."

"Auntie must have plenty to eat, and of the best; she has been used to it," flashed out Miss Barton, as a positive discharge.

"Certainly. But kindly allow me to explain her condition, then *she* (I heaped 'she' with emphasis, hoping to convey a hint of the why of my wondrous deception) will see the necessity for a prescribed diet. You know, Miss Longshore, that the blood naturally contains a large amount of iron, which you also know is an excellent conductor and retainer of electricity. Your fine physique warrants me in believing that you have been a good liver, and fond of animal food."

Miss Longshore nodded affirmatively. The foot of her fair niece ceased its tapping, which betrayed interest. "Auntie is a great meat-eater," she said, impulsively, and evidently, unintentionally; for the foot tapped a protest, and her bowed mouth became taut with determination to hold word-arrows.

"Oh no, Floy."

"Yes you are, auntie; you know that you are. Anything you like, you think is good for you and will have it. She will rob the larder, if you do not give it to her, doctor."

That was an escaped shot. Both feet sounded cautionary signals. Miss Longshore retorted with: "Well, Floy, we all have our pet weaknesses. Your dissipation is in candy. You insist that pounds of it do not hurt you, and you certainly illustrate your faith."

The feet continued their indicatory duet, and there was the tremor of a smile about the drawn lips. I felt a thrill of thankfulness that the darts of the storm had chosen another target. My courage and fabricating ability were increased; I advanced my astounding theories bravely. "Meats are heavily laden with iron. Because of some defect in your digestive apparatus; which must be immediately remedied; your blood is abnormally freighted with the iron you absorb from your food; for this reason, your entire circulatory system has become a host and conductor for every electric current coming into contact with it; either from the earth direct, or indirectly from charged wires passing near you. A vegetable diet, together with proper iron solvents, will soon reduce the amount of the metal in your system, and lessen your capacity as a storage battery. You will also be a non-conductor."

Miss Barton's feet struck the floor simultaneously. She rose from her chair and stood rigidly upon them. Her eyes scintillated as though she, too, was highly charged. "Doctor Minor, I desire to speak to you. Auntie, please excuse me for a little while."

To be "stood up" by a beautiful woman, whose every amiable feature told that it took something far from the ordinary to disturb them into passion; to feel that one is going to be "talked to" as not even the possessor of the corpse of a conscience; to know that the gratification every being with a soul has in being "liked," is surely slipping away; is like arriving late for dinner, finding it cleared away, and being scolded for lack of consideration.

Never was there an angelic interference more acceptable and timely, than came in the low, dignified tones of Miss Longshore, which carried with them command. "In a few minutes, Floy dear. Excuse *me*, please. The doctor seems to thoroughly understand my case; I want to tell him what I have not yet told him." Turning to me as she rose: "Doctor, will you kindly walk down to the edge of the lake with me?"

"Auntie!" — Miss Barton bit off her exclamatory sentence with a snap, and with hands clasped in front, form erect, face averted, gaze far over the tree-tops, a ticking foot acting as escapement for her anger, she stood the picturesque embodiment of indignation. After an awkward and somewhat flighty apology, Miss Longshore and myself walked down to the water's edge.

One could not think of her as old. Her youthful figure and quick step, were heterogeneous from her silvered hair. Her mouth was as fascinating, her eyes as bright, her ears as exquisitely modelled as my lady's, yonder upon the porch. "Doctor," she said, smiling a dismissal to any incredulity that might arise in me from her coming words. "Floy and I are devoted to each other, her parents are dead and I am her only near relative; but she thinks I am crazy; that my sufferings and annoyances are all imaginary. From what you have said to me, I learn that you know they are not. I thank you very much for your interest, and I feel relieved because you do not agree with her. [I converted a chuckle into an endorsing smile.] There is nothing whatever the matter with me, excepting, perhaps, what you have lucidly explained to me. The real cause of my trouble is, that when I was settling my brother's — Floy's father's — large estate, I suppose I made enemies. There are five of them, and a most vindictive set they are." Her face flushed again as she spoke, and the same terrified look contracted it. "They are spiritualists, mesmerists, psychologists, electricians. They hear every word I say, and know all I do or think. They send taunting messages to me on the wires; they project currents through the air: establish communication with me at all hours of the day and night.

They taunt, abuse, slander me, until I call out in agony and anger. I want them arrested, tried in court, put under bail or imprisonment, until they let me alone. If ever I get hold of any of them, I will do them harm. They must stop annoying me."

Excitement was controlling her. She trembled with a rage she vainly endeavored to repress. "Floy induced me to come to you. I have no one to help me. Won't you? Won't you see these villians? Won't you have them arrested?"

"Certainly; I will be only too glad to help you," I answered, sympathetically. "Where do these people live?"

"I cannot find out. They keep themselves hidden from me. They move about, so that they can annoy me without being detected; yet they keep up constant communication with me."

"What are their names?" I queried, taking out my note-book to write them down.

"I do not know," she replied, confusedly. "I offended them unintentionally. To my knowledge, I never saw them. There are three men and two women. Oh, what horrible things they say to me!"

"Do you not think," I ventured, "that it will be rather difficult to find and arrest them, without knowing their names and residences?"

"You can do it, I know. I will help you. I have confidence in you. I know you can do it. Will you not?" She was pleading now. Her appealing voice would have won a Democritus to her side; self-blinded as he was, that he might not see and love a woman.

"I will," I answered, firmly. "If I cannot find them, I am a spiritualist, mesmerist, psychologist and expert electrician, I will use my will-power and leaning against your tormentors, neutralize or overcome their power, and you will be freed."

"Thank you, Oh, thank you!" She sat a few moments silent, evidently greatly relieved. Then with eyes soft under love's film, she said: "You must not mind what Floy does or says. I see that she is displeased with you about something. She would fight—die for me; she loves me so. I have cared for her since she was a babe. Anything affecting me, affects her. I seem to have absorbed her; she represents me whenever I need a guarding care or feel a want. I am worried about her. I fear that her mind is tottering. It is partly on her account that I consented to come here. Ever since she has urged me to come, she has told me of sensations and visitations which are nothing but fancies, hallucinations, crazy notions. But I promised her that she should tell you of them herself; so I must be silent. We must go to her now. Be gentle and firm with her. She is the loveliest of women, but likes to have her own way. Once win her gratitude, and she would believe you an angel of goodness, if you were a fiend of iniquity."

"Phew!" I said to myself, as we returned to the house, "I have kept the Recording Angel busy for this half-hour — unless professional lies are not scored."

Miss Barton's attitude was but little changed. She leaned against one of the fluted columns, gorgeous in her beauty. Her eyes had the same far-away look, her nose a significant elevation, the exquisite curve of her throat, a stretch of disdain, and the toe of one shoe was moving up and down rhythmically over the edge of the porch. Nevertheless, I settled it with myself, then and there, that I would rather look at her, mad, than not at all.

Many substances do not assimilate when cold, which, when heated, have strong affinities. Man and woman are naturally coalescing bodies, if their temperature is right. Undoubtedly I was ready for an affinity; but while my affiliating point was reached, Miss Barton's was evidently going the other way. There was but one thing to do — check my lady's approach to freezing and start her toward my thermal line. "Miss Barton," I requested, after seating her aunt, "you expressed a wish to speak to me. Will you go into the parlor with me?"

"Thank you, sir: I prefer walking out the drive. There is a stalwart sincerity about these oaks which will be comforting." There was an accent on 'sincerity' intended to send my conscience fathoms into Truth's well, there to grovel before the hidden dame.

"I have arranged everything with the doctor, Floy. Perhaps you need not go," remarked Miss Longshore, kindly.

"I must go, auntie. I do not want that we shall enter this establishment, unless I first understand Doctor Minor, and have a perfect understanding with him." This was said with admirable firmness. She led the way on to the drive. The roadside oaks touched their branches caressingly above our heads; a thrush rang its melodious chime from a near-by beech, to while the time of its sitting mate away; a tanager, crimson as blood against the dark green of clustered alders, whistled to his love across the glassy pool; all were in affinity, save we who walked the drive together, making no sound more harmonious than the gravel's crunch. Presently she spoke. Each word was full measure, each interval overweight of the harsh unspoken. "Doctor Minor, I am disappointed, indignant, disgusted, hopeless. After fully satisfying myself that this was the best place to bring my aunt to be treated for her distressing malady, and hoping so much from your acknowledged skill, I find myself in an atmosphere of deception, and you a — a prevaricator and trifler. I will not allow my aunt to remain here. You are deceiving her. Your theories are preposterous, your plans ridiculous. I wonder that she did not detect your fallacies and resent your im — impositions."

"Is she not deceiving herself?" I asked quietly. "Do you believe that she receives electric currents from the ground, from wires, through the air; that she is actually persecuted by persons at a distance, whose names and residences she does not know? Are not these hallucinations, self-deceptions? Is it not better for me to quietly deceive her in a way that will do her good — give her relief, interest her in her own cure — than to allow her to deceive herself in a manner that is doing her harm, and which will ultimately destroy her mind?"

She stopped so abruptly, that I thought she was turning away to leave me. My feeling was akin to that of one watching the moving away of an unreachd train, intended to be the carrier to anticipated pleasures. Wheeling upon the step I had taken in advance, I found her standing, her eyes waiting mine, her rich color flooding as sunset to anger; I saw the coming laxity of distress, the timidity of beseechment. Chilling anxiety gave a tremor to her voice as she questioned: "Oh, I see, sir. Is this the only way? You have already begun treating her case?"

"Yes. I was compelled to decide suddenly upon my course. Experience pointed out the only one. First impressions upon infirm intellects are lasting for either good or evil. Silence would have been interpreted by her into either lack of interest or of understanding — perhaps worse — a doubt upon my part of the realness of her sensations."

"Forgive me, please forgive my unkind words. My stupidity is to blame. I got angry. I love auntie so much that I could not bear (as I thought) to hear her deceived and trifled with. It was my stupidity. Do please forgive me! And you have been so patient under it all."

Next to the ducking effect of being "stood up" and "talked to" is the embarrassing one of an apology from a lovely penitent; nevertheless, when there is a soothing compliment attached, the merry way of a laugh leads out of it. Taking such a welcome opening, I laughingly said: "I will have to take you into my confidence in the future, Miss Barton, if your good aunt does not surprise some chimerical scheme out of me before I have time to so do. 'Patient,' you kindly say. Why, after graduating, and beginning the practice of my specialty, I found that I had not learned the first principle — patience. I had to begin studying anew, and have as yet not reached much beyond the orthography of the word."

She gave me a grateful glance, and smiled as she said: "I understand you this time. You are very kind; you are letting me off easy. As far as I can I will make amends for my hasty rudeness. I assure you, I think auntie is in excellent hands. We will remain here."

"Thank you," I replied assuringly. "But I am forced to be the

aggressor now. You must not think me ungracious. It is a fixed rule in our establishment, that no relative, companion, or even accustomed servant, shall remain with a patient. The reason is obvious; the patient must be entirely separated from previous environment; enter a new life where every association, care, treatment, firmness, sympathy, has but one purpose — cure. I regret very much having to separate you from your aunt."

I was surprised to hear a little ripple of laughter, instead of a pathetic protest. All the while she was watching the toe of her neat-fitting boot designing an intricate problem in unheard-of mathematics, on the gravel of the drive.

"I know," she answered; "I heard of your rule long ago. Auntie would not have come here without me. She will not stay without me. You cannot get rid of me. I intend remaining as a patient. Has not auntie told you that I am crazy?"

"Yes. Do you think you are?" I asked incredulously.

There was a gleesome twinkle in her eyes as she asked: "Have you not just explained to me, that a diseased mind cannot pass judgment upon its own ailments. How can mine?"

As we, every one of us, believe our own arguments to be invincible, my own, so aptly quoted to me, was, of course, unanswerable. "It cannot," I answered, ashamed and pained to make a confession so seemingly derogatory to her. "Your aunt told me that you preferred telling me of yourself. Will you do so now?"

"Certainly," she replied, looking me unflinchingly in the eyes, while the tell-tale foot swiftly scattered the entangled problem, telling plainly that she had reached a determination as unswerving as geometric laws. Again her words were carefully measured, but the intervals told of a confusion which made me suspect evasion in them. "Auntie's enemies are mine, whether they are imaginary or real. If they taunt and slander her, they taunt and slander me. You know that it is mathematically demonstrable, that a body once set in motion is never again at rest. The song of birds, the music of a distant band, the rumble of thunder, the boom of far-away cannon are but disturbances of the air which reach the ear. Do they ever cease? Is not the faintest whisper ever breathed in prehistoric times, still vibrating in the infinity of space? Are there not millions of sounds too faint or shrill for the human ear to catch? Yet is it not possible for the human organ of hearing to be so abnormally sensitive to sound disturbances that voices many miles away may reach and impress their words upon them? Do not these enemies of auntie's, therefore of mine, reach me in this way, and annoy me? Or, are these voices imaginary, these ideas hallucinatory, and I as crazy as auntie?"

"*Do* you hear these voices?" Doubt was heavily implied in the "*do*." She had carefully abstained from asserting that she believed in her theory or had proof of its consummation.

The direct question puzzled her — was disconcerting. Her long lashes drooped to hide her truthful eyes; color mounted her dainty ears in protest against their hearing a wrong; a blush mocked the fixed candor in her dimples; her honest lips paled before words tainted with trickery; determination to enforce some preconceived plan, alone, steadied her voice for reply. "How can I help it, if such voices are directed toward me, and I am auricularly sensitive to hear them? But why talk further about it? Auntie says I am crazy, so I must be. I place myself under your care as a patient. As my mental condition undoubtedly impresses you as similar to auntie's, you can treat us together — make one job of it. You may deceive me as much as you please, I will understand you. Indeed, I cannot leave auntie. You will allow me to remain, will you not?"

Stranger as I was to her; modest and thoroughbred as she was; she looked up into my face confidently, yet smiled coaxingly.

In the curriculum of the world's schools, there is no course analytic of the wiles of women. They are unclassified in the philosophies, and unremedied in the pharmacopœias. Neither education nor experience had fortified me against them. The sexed epidemic, ever prevalent, was seductively present before me; I was caught by it, succumbed to it. I surrendered to pleasant necessity, and answered her question at once. "As the rule was of my making, I will suspend it in your favor; provided, you consent, for your aunt's sake, that we become co-conspirators."

"Co-conspirators? How? In what way?"

"Yes, conspirators." I intended to affect seriousness, but a laugh would out at her well-feigned astonishment. "And a capital conspirator you are. Confess now, that there is not one whit the matter with you; that your miraculous, super-scientific discovery in pneumatics, your marvellous aural susceptibility to improbabilities of sound, your equal partnership with your aunt in hypothetical enemies, your feigned cerebral meteoroids, were all generously conceived with the intention, that they might act upon that afflicted lady as an alarming counter-irritant, which would induce her to bring you here for treatment, instead of herself; really to be cured of you. Own up, please, that you, not I, were the first to deceive her; that you half intended I should be a fellow-victim; that you, in your great love for your aunt, might leap over a rule or break it down, and that I ought to hurl at you all of those very expressive *escharotic* adjectives you plastered poor me with, a little while ago."

Her merry laugh filled the woods with bells. "What an arraign-

ment!" she exclaimed, gayly. "I plead guilty. I will join you; be a co-conspirator, do anything to save auntie. Tell me what to do. I am full of joy in that I can help. I consent. We are co-conspirators."

From that hour we were.

A more delightful lady (save her fair niece) than Miss Longshore, I never met. Excepting her affinity for electricity, she had not a peculiarity. She clung tenaciously to her theories, and suffered untold torture when one of her "spells" was on. But dietary methods soon reduced their frequency and violence.

Miss Barton graciously submitted to the same regime; but developed remarkable detective ability in discovering her aunt's hiding-places for cribbed meats and smuggled pastry; which she ate in conscientious consideration, and as reward for duty done. Her phonetic impressibility decreased slightly in advance of Miss Longshore's riddance of electric currents, that she might foster hope in her aunt, by her own well-acted convalescence. Her fertility in resource, when the unsuspecting idiosyncryst must be outwitted, exceeded all acknowledged feminine superiority in that line. Her tact with all the patients put me to blush. She was a born conspirator. How she enjoyed her license to conspire!

Retreating blushes, which my sudden coming into her presence surprised, laughing recitals of rollicking schemes for the straightening of some oblique intellect, which she knew would please me; clusters of wild flowers, mysteriously present on my desk, and on my part, an ungovernable disposition to see her forty times a day, without reasons therefor above an idiot's, made me suspect that a third conspirator more wily than either had joined us, who was chief and master of us both.

I knew (Miss Longshore had told me) that the bulwark to her heart was gratitude; that won, her great love would cry "quarter" and surrendering ask not ransom. The cure of her aunt would be my hammer of Thor. To effect this cure, I reversed every electric law and made new ones as they were needed. When electric lights were introduced into the house, Miss Longshore was told that they were all supplied with negative electricity which repelled all other, come from what source it might; therefore, guarding to her. The boxed convertors outside the walls were put there at a heavy expense, that they might convert any malignant charge attempting to reach Miss Longshore, into the most benign of currents. The leaden shreds in the fuse boxes would melt if one single particle of mesmeric, psychologic, spiritualistic ideomagnetism from her enemies tried to sneak in. She was insulated from the earth by rubber soles; from the heavens by a rubber cap, and on every other spot where she conceived herself electrically vulnerable, by

rubber sheets proportionate to the territory. Had she fallen she would have bounced like a ball.

We three were the best of friends. Miss Barton did not fail me once; Miss Longshore never suspected the conspiracy. We were happy together. The summer days passed lightly. Even the "long month of August" evaporated. The autumn leaves were sailing the pond when the climax came. One by one Miss Longshore discarded her insulators; one by one her enemies forsook her, and her fancies vanished; until, at last, she was enemy, rubber, and fancy free — save of one. She fancied that she was soaked with electricity, which could not be removed. This was partially discharged by having her rubbed the wrong way. She felt the efficacy of it, because she had seen the plan work upon cats. Still, some remained; she felt its tingling in her head, and finger-tips.

One day, a corruscating idea flashed a scheme for her entire cure. I laughed loudly at the impudent ridiculousness of it. My co-conspirator, from whom I hid nothing, nor was there use in trying, was soon deep in the plot and joyfully anticipating the results.

When Miss Longshore next complained of a commotion in her latent electricity, I told her that I had hit upon a plan for its final discharge, which could not fail. I demonstrated how a watch when taken into the presence of powerful currents or running dynamos was magnetized, and stored the magnetism to its injury. Nor would it run properly until it was de-magnetized. Like such a watch, her internal machinery had been magnetized, neither would it run right or be in perfect order until she was de-magnetized. This could be done by placing her in the presence of a dynamo and running it backwards, which would pull out the electricity and send it to the ground, where it belonged. Miss Barton calculated the storage capacity of her aunt's system, and the amount of electricity in it, supposing it to be full; also, how many backward revolutions of a brush of a certain diameter against an armature of given power it would take to empty it; or rather, leave only a natural percentage for ordinary purposes, and rattled off additions, multiplications, subtractions, divisions, in volts, ampères, watts, ohms, with such rapidity that even figures, proverbial for their truthfulness, so greatly assisted in our artifice that Miss Longshore became enthusiastic to admitting that she would thus bury her last ampère forever. She urged that we go at once.

The day was of the October sort. The trees were disrobing for their winter sleep; the herbage was skeletonizing itself; the veil of foliage was falling from off the roundings of the hills; bird-song was hushed; the echoes were speechless. In no little trepidation we, the conspirators, walked with Miss Longshore to the electric-plant. The happiness of three mortals depended upon the rupture of an imagination. In a

little while we stood in the presence of those giants battling with a mysterious force. Miss Longshore stepped upon a rubber-mat placed at a measured distance from the dynamo, her face radiant with certainty. Miss Barton handed the engineer (who was schooled to his part in the comedy) a paper covered with the results of her electro-mathematics. All was ready. The driving-belt had been crossed to reverse the motion of the wire-brushes. The engine started ahead, gave a certain number of turns — stopped.

“You are de-magnetized, madame,” said the engineer, bowing.

“I know it! I feel it! Thank God I am freed! I am well! Oh, Floy!” And tears of joy stood in the dear old lady’s dancing eyes, as she whirled from the mat like a lass of sixteen. Some kissing followed to which I was a hungry spectator.

During our saunter home, Miss Longshore was very quiet, thinking deeply. Flushes of pleasure came and went, keeping her face well fed with peace. As we neared the house, she spoke to me tenderly: “Doctor, my good friend, I see it all. I have been an old fool. You and Floy have been co-conspirators, but, oh, how I thank you! And — and” — She paused, drew my head down, and whispered in my ear: “You have won Floy’s gratitude. Take it, and the treasure with it. I see it all.” She quickly left us, and tripped gayly off to the house.

Miss Barton and I sat down by the pond’s edge, and there I told her of my love.

“Are you plotting against your co-conspirator? Are you deceiving me?” she asked naively.

“I loved you from the first — when you scolded me, yonder upon the drive,” I answered earnestly.

“Well,” she said, laying her hand trustingly upon my arm, “I think it was an electrical case.”